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THE ILIAD OF HOMER

VOLUME ONE

THE ILIAD OF HOMER

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH HEXAMETER
VERSE BY

PRENTISS CUMMINGS

AN ABRIDGMENT

WHICH INCLUDES ALL THE MAIN STORY AND THE
MOST CELEBRATED PASSAGES

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME ONE

BOSTON
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
1910

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THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

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INTRODUCTION

It is altogether probable that the Trojan War, so called, has a basis of historic fact, and that very considerable literature respecting it existed before the time of Homer. A poem so skilful as the *Iliad* could hardly be accounted for unless there had been earlier literature of real merit; and the leading characters of the *Iliad*, such as Achil'les, Agamem'non, Odys'seus, Pri'am, Hec'tor, Hel'en and Par'is are introduced as if their names were presumed to be familiar to the ordinary Homeric audience. It has been observed that Agamem'non is repeatedly called by his patronymic "Atrei'des" before his distinctive name is given, and that Patro'klos is first mentioned simply as the "Son of Menoi'tios." Belief that such names were familiar is strengthened by the fact that, as to many subordinate characters who probably were inventions of the poet, their parentage, birth-place or dwelling-place, and some story of the family are told by way of introduction. Thus a kind of *Iliad* consisting of disconnected tales relating to the Trojan War and its heroes existed before the time of Homer, — tales varying in antiquity, in artistic merit, and in relative conditions of civilization and savagery.

Of the wealth of pure myth which forms the setting of the *Iliad* it is also probable that much antedated the poem as originally composed, and into that the poem

was fitted; and that much is of later date and invented to fit the poem. There is evidence also that names and myths belonging to other localities are boldly appropriated by the poet and made to do duty as part of the story of Troy.

The myths most fundamental to the main story center largely about the marriage of Pe'leus and The'tis. The'tis was daughter of Ne'reus, "the Ancient of the Sea," and when grown was so beautiful that many of the gods would have wished her in marriage but for an oracle that she would bear a son mightier than his father. That kind of a son the gods did not want, and as a matter of precaution it was decided that she must marry a mortal. Accordingly the gods arranged that she should be captured on the seashore by Pe'leus, king of the Myr'midons. Thetis submitted to this marriage with reluctance; and to make the affair as palatable to her as possible the gods gave her a brilliant wedding; among other gifts they gave Peleus a suit of divine armor, and Posei'don (Neptune) gave him the immortal horses, Xan'thos and Ba'lios, named in the poem. From Peleus and Thetis was born an only son, Achilles, the hero of the Iliad. Of these three characters Peleus only appears in the poem by hearsay, yet the reader will have a vivid picture of an old man wise, high-minded, generous, and kindly. Thetis is the fond mother of an only son, and takes his part in every controversy as a complete partisan. Achilles is highly gifted both physically and mentally, is intense in his loves and hates, and the reader will feel that he has a noble na-

ture; but he is a spoiled child of fortune, and is selfish, impetuous, wilful and often unreasonable, ambitious, and tenacious as to all matters pertaining to his personal dignity and interests. The reader most probably will like Hector the better of the two, but will realize that he represents an inferior type of man.

To insure harmony at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis the goddess Discord was not invited; but she in revenge threw an apple into the midst to be awarded to the most beautiful goddess present. This made trouble enough, for He'ra (Juno), Athe'na (Minerva) and Aphrodi'tè (Venus) all claimed the apple. As a decision in favor of either would give great offense to the other two, Zeus (Jupiter) left the question to a mortal, Paris, son of Priam. Before the birth of Paris his mother Hek'abè (Hecuba) dreamed she brought forth a firebrand that consumed the city of Troy; and deeming the dream a portent, his parents exposed him to die on Mt. Ida. As happened in other myths, the child was found by a shepherd and brought up as his own. The goddesses all three sought to bribe Paris, Hera promising power, Athena wisdom, and Aphrodi'tè the most beautiful woman on earth as a wife; and he awarded the apple to Aphrodi'tè. His true parentage was then made known, and he sailed to Sparta and brought back Helen, wife of King Menela'üs, a brother of Agamemnon. To recover Helen an army was collected which sailed to Troy, and captured it in the tenth year of the war. The myth of the judgment of Paris seems to have been invented to fit the story. It is only

alluded to once in the Iliad in a passage which is obscure and probably a late interpolation; and Hera and Athena, while bitter against the Trojans generally, nowhere show ill will to Paris himself, not even misdirecting his darts. The reader will observe how little the Achai'ans talk about Helen, and how much about booty; and it is altogether improbable that the war was in fact for any other object than plunder and adventure.

This translation comprises about half the Iliad, and includes all the main story and nearly all the most celebrated passages. The abridgment was not merely to save work. The omitted parts with few exceptions are inferior in literary skill and interest, are irrelevant to the plot and unduly delay its action, and in the opinion of the translator are mostly interpolations or later additions. Apart from these considerations the Iliad is much too long to suit modern taste; and its inordinate length, even in ancient times, became a proverb both in the Greek and Latin tongues. The scholar who cares little for the story as a whole, and likes to pick up the original for single passages, and the student and antiquarian who read it for special purposes, find the Iliad none too long, but with the ordinary reader it is otherwise.

That the Iliad, as it now stands, lacks unity as a poem in the sense that the several parts do not fit together well, and that much serves no purpose in the development of the plot, appears to be beyond controversy. If the work of one man, it must be deemed a reservoir from which

to draw different settings for its main story. As to unity of authorship, opinions are still divided, and any comprehensive discussion of the subject is inadvisable here; but as the present translator has at least been a long and faithful student of the poem, he could hardly fail to have an opinion. In brief that opinion is that, in addition to minor interpolations, at least three great authors had a hand in the composition of the Iliad; and this opinion is not based on differences of style, though such differences exist, but upon apparent mental and moral differences in the author, differences in taste, in purpose, and in the plan and conception of the poem.

In line with what seem the best authorities, I believe that the Iliad as we now have it began with a simple lay, "The Wrath of Achilles," and consisted mainly of the relevant parts of the first, eleventh, sixteenth, eighteenth, nineteenth and twenty-second books, giving an account of the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon, the appeal of Achilles to Thetis to obtain the interference of Zeus to right the wrong done him, her advice to him to abstain from the war, the granting by Zeus of victory to the Trojans, so that from waging merely defensive war they actually threatened to destroy the ships which, being drawn up on the shore, formed the camp and principal barracks of the Achaians, the relenting by Achilles so far as to let his friend Patro'klos lead the Myrmidons out to save the ships, the fall of Patroklos at the hands of Hector, the consequent renunciation by Achilles of his wrath and inactivity, and his slaying of Hector.

Such a lay would have a fine ending in line 366 of Book XXII, where Achilles says that, having killed Hector, he is now ready for his own death when the gods will. This lay would be as simple as the Greek tragedies of later date, and its unity complete, but it would be limited in its scope. It would be exclusively addressed to men — the only women personally alluded to being the two captives who were cause of the quarrel, Helen, who is mentioned only as wife of Paris, Klytemnes'tra, mentioned once, and Hek'abè, the only woman who utters a word in the whole lay, and that a brief appeal to Hector not to fight Achilles single-handed; and it is far from certain that her speech and the allusions to Helen were not added later. It will be noticed, too, that in the supposed lay Paris is a successful warrior and no poltroon, Agamemnon never loses his courage, Nestor is a prudent adviser and not a bore, Zeus is not made ridiculous or the dupe of anybody, and comparatively little appears to awaken sympathy for Hector, so that the final triumph of Achilles would meet the full approval of an audience.

This lay was of suitable length for a single recitation, undoubtedly proved popular, and the author not improbably made improvements and additions; and the evidence has never satisfied me that he may not have added the eighth, ninth, and twelfth books, though not precisely in their present form. The alleged discrepancy between Book IX and certain passages in Books XI and XVI have been made too much of, for in those passages Achilles may well have been influenced by the

warnings of Phoinix that the promises of Agamemnon might never be renewed or realized, even though he saved the army later.

To this lay, of which Achilles is the hero and which deals with the woes brought on the Achaians by the quarrel between their leaders, some one made important additions, markedly different in style and purpose from the preceding, which recount with equal force the woes of the Trojans. In these additions Hector is the hero; and to excite our sympathy and make us realize the pathos of the Trojan situation Andro'machè, Hector's wife, and other Trojan women are introduced. The parts so added are portions of the fifth, sixth, seventh, twenty-second, twenty-third and twenty-fourth books. Precisely how the additions in the three earlier books named were fitted into the story it is idle to speculate, — perhaps they came after Book I, beginning as Book V now begins; but they might well have been inserted between lines 492 and 493 of Book I as being occurrences during the twelve days Zeus was absent, and before he was appealed to by Thetis. With the additions so placed, the plan of the story is actually strengthened by showing Hector overmatched by both Diome'des and Ai'as, and the Achaians in no wise imperiled by the absence of Achilles, thus making the interference of Zeus necessary to the development of the plot, as well as more dramatic.

There is no question that much of this series of additions is in the style of the better parts of the Odyssey: they are much more pathetic and indicate more human-

ity and civilization than anything in the original "Wrath," are simpler and more exact in expression, and suggest a mind less forcible and less poetic than that of the original composer. The second writer did not change the original plan of the story, but enlarged and embellished it, and the poem as he left it was still as simple as a later tragedy, and as tragic; nor did he degrade the original characters, but developed that of Achilles by showing his better nature under new conditions; and the tale was still "The Wrath of Achilles."

If it should be assumed that the Homer of the "Wrath" composed it early in life, and later composed the *Odyssey*, it would be easy to believe that the second or "Trojan" Homer was the same man grown old. The conception of the plot and of the characters is unchanged; and the change in sentiment, temperament, and breadth of view are precisely what would be expected from increase of age and experience. Homer at twenty-five and at fifty-five would almost be a different man. Even the unlike style and forms of expression would in a measure be accounted for, for a language, mainly at least unwritten, would change rapidly. In reply to this view I can offer nothing very tangible to another; but in the long task of trying to render the *Iliad* into readable English hexameters I have felt a sort of personal intimacy with the author, and in the two parts named have felt that I was in contact with a different man and a different mind; nor do I believe that the Homer of the "Wrath" was the author of the *Odyssey*.

The third Homeric author I will call the "Homer of

the *Iliad*," believing that some person later than the two named conceived the idea of taking as a nucleus the "Wrath" as left by his predecessors and enlarging its scope so as to cover more fully the story of Troy. His additions, unlike those of his immediate predecessor, are not subservient to the original story, often are not germane to it, and do not embellish it as such, though no doubt embellishments to literature. The work of his predecessors he appears to have left comparatively unchanged, either through reverence or because its form was too well established in the popular mind; but he added and inserted more or less in all the books as we now have them, and made some re-arrangements to suit the new matter and conceal discrepancies between new and old. His additions appear to consist in part of other literature relating to the Trojan War alluded to in the first paragraph of this introduction, somewhat modified no doubt, but to a considerable extent to be his own composition; and I believe he was the author of the twenty-fourth book of the *Odyssey*, and made interpolations in other books of that poem also.

As to the *Iliad*, I think the third Homer is responsible for the interpolation of lines 430-489 in Book I; that in Book II lines 1-71 (omitting 53 and 54) and 381-431 originally took the place of the first fourteen lines of Book XI, and were transferred to their present place and greatly enlarged to give Books III and IV some pretext for being in the poem at all; and that most of Books II, III and IV, including the involved similes and catalogue, were the composition of the third Homer.

I also hold him responsible for the Aphrodite and Ares episodes in Book V, the "Glaukos and Diomedes" and the "Hector, Paris, and Helen" in Book VI, — lines 365–368 (the first two words of 365 being supplemented by the words at the beginning of 280) originally taking the place of 280–285, and line 370 (in substance) originally succeeding line 312.

I also hold the third Homer responsible for the lines connecting Books VI and VII, and for all of Book VII after line 312; that he interpolated much in Book VIII; that he inserted in Book IX lines 9–88, 444–484 and 502–514 at least; that Book X is wholly his; that in Book XI he inserted the well known Nestor interpolation; that he was author of most of XIII, XIV and XV; that in XVI he is responsible for lines 168–197, 268–275, and much else, including the disarming of Patroklos by Apollo; that he is responsible for the "shield of Achilles" episode in XVIII and XIX, also for lines 91–136 in XIX and much else, and for most of XX and XXI; that he was author of the funeral games in XXIII and responsible for some of the barbarity of Achilles in the same Book; and that he was author of lines 719–776 and some stray lines in Book XXIV.

This third author has marked personal characteristics, not to mention style; he had a keen sense of humor wherein (using the word in its ordinary sense) his predecessors were lacking; and whereas they were always serious, his vein is much lighter, and he had a lighter fancy and lighter poetic touch. As stated above, the first Homer barely alludes to women; the second Homer,

whose object was to excite sympathy, deals with women on the domestic side, — that is, as wives, mothers and daughters; but the third Homer deals with them on the sexual side, and has a taste for stories showing the semi-humorous side of the sexual relation. He not only introduces the tales about Helen, Antei'a, the mother of Phoinix, and of Hera in Books XIII–XV, but all the curious stories of the birth of certain characters, and of sexual relations between gods and mortal women. He also introduced all the magic, all the miraculous healing, all miraculous transportation of men from danger, and other extravagances which have led to criticism of Homer's judgment. He degraded many of the men characters as drawn by his predecessors, and he is fond of anecdote without much regard to appropriateness, or whether an anecdote contributes to the story as a whole, — evidently seeking variety and to avoid making a tragedy too tragic. The "Deception of Zeus" occupies three books, is awkwardly introduced, and while amusing and talented and truly poetical, it has nothing whatever to do with the story as a whole, is not alluded to afterwards, and contributes nothing to any result; and in order to recover the thread of the story a case of miraculous healing is required.

The "Glaukos and Diomedes" in Book VI is a tale after the third Homer's own heart, has a woman story that suits him, a fire-breathing monster, and a liaison between Zeus and a mortal woman (not to mention much betraying a comparatively late origin), and, as Leaf says truly, it forms a pleasing contrast with the

scenes of carnage preceding, — but as I fathom the purpose of the second Homer, who was the original author of the Book, a pleasing contrast of the kind would have been avoided. Taking Book VI with that scene omitted there is an evident purpose to fill the reader's mind with sympathy for the Trojan situation by a series of events leading up to the "Hector and Andromache" scene as a climax.

First, we have the death of Ak'amas.

Second, the slaying of Axy'los with his squire, and a statement of what a good man he was.

Third, the slaying of Dre'sos and Ophetios; followed by the death of two interesting youths (an interpolation of the third Homer).

Fourth, each of the Achaian heroes slays his man.

Fifth, the pitiful story of Adres'tos, who was slain in cold blood while a prisoner, accompanied by a speech of Agamemnon exceeding in brutality any other in the Iliad.

Sixth, a bloodthirsty speech of Nestor, exceeding in that respect any other from him.

Seventh, Hector goes to the city to bid the women pray to Athena as the only hope.

Eighth, the wives and daughters of Troy crowd around him, asking anxiously for kindred in the field. Hector only bids them pray.

Ninth, Hector's interview with his mother.

Tenth, the prayers of the Trojan women, and the dramatic line that their prayers were fruitless.

Eleventh, Hector's interview with Paris, showing that all this sorrow was for the sake of a worthless brother

without any sense of responsibility. (Interpolation of the third Homer.)

Twelfth, the parting of Hector and Andromache.

Into this series of events is injected the Glaukos-Diomedes incident, so long and interesting as to obliterate the effect of what has gone before, and which shows Diomedes so right-minded as to make the capture of Troy seem not so very serious to the inhabitants, after all, thus putting the reader out of sympathy with the prayers of the Trojan women; and the "Hector and Andromache," instead of coming as a skilfully wrought climax, is comparatively an isolated scene. Certain ancient Greek authorities declare the "Glaukos and Diomedes" out of its proper place, but give no explanations. It certainly is out of its place rhetorically.

The introduction of Helen and the making of the truce in Book III are fine, but the truce must be broken that the story may go on, and it is accomplished by the treacherous wounding of Menelaus. This important event plays no further part in the story, and is not alluded to where we would certainly expect it; for on the same day when Menelaus is inclined to spare Adrestos, Agamemnon reprimands him, reminding him of the elopement of Helen, but not alluding to what the Trojans had just done to him after a solemn compact; and again on the same day another compact is made on the challenge of Hector, and Menelaus arms to meet him and is again reprimanded by Agamemnon on the ground that he is no match for Hector, — but Menelaus is not reminded that he had had an arrow shot through

his thigh that morning which would make him less able than ever. Zeus, who in Book II is lying awake nights planning how to bring disaster on the Achaians, so as to avenge Achilles, is represented in Book IV, the very next morning, seriously urging the gods to make the truce between the parties permanent, thus leaving Achilles absolutely in the lurch. These, and many similar surprises, make it impossible for me to believe that a single author and man of genius, who must needs be a severe critic of his own work, one who passed his life giving recitations of that work, would have left the Iliad in the condition in which we find it.

My belief in divided authorship makes the Iliad more interesting, not less so; but leads to the opinion that a translation aiming to do justice to the author or authors should be even more abridged than this, and that more of the work of the third Homer should be published independently as Homeric episodes, presumptively used by the ancient reciter or not, as he saw fit at the time. I have retained practically everything that I attribute to the first and second Homers, and have retained the best of the third Homer's work, though some material thus retained is far from adding to the story as a whole.

All the proper names in this translation are to be pronounced with the accent called for by the rhythm, but the reader is reminded of a few general rules:

The diphthongs -ai and -ei¹ have the sound of

¹ The practice as to the diphthong ei is divided, many giving it the sound of a in fate.

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i long. In a few cases those combinations are not diphthongs, as in the names Bri se' is, Chry se' is, and of the river Sel le' is.

E and O have the long sound in the termination -es and -on, though unaccented and short in time, as Achil'les, Posei'don.

The termination -eus is pronounced like the English *noun* "use," as Pe'leus, A'treus. Zeus is therefore a monosyllable, Zūs.

The termination -la'os or -la'us is a dissyllable accented on the a, as Men e la'us.

The reader is also reminded that the termination -des means "son of," as Atrei'des, son of Atreus; Pelei'des, son of Peleus; Tydei'des, son of Tydeus; and Kron'ides, son of Kronos. In a few instances Achilles is called "Aiak'ides," i. e. grandson of Ai'akos (Æ'acus).

MOST COMMON NAMES OF GODS AND GODDESSES }

Zeus (Zūs)	Latin	Jupiter, king of the gods
Kro ni' on, another name of Zeus		
He' ra	Latin	Juno, wife of Zeus
Po sei' don, brother of Zeus, Latin		Neptune, god of the sea
Kro' nos	Latin	Saturn, father of Zeus, Poseidon, Hades and Hera
Ha' des	"	Pluto, god of the lower world
A the' na	"	Minerva
Aph ro di' tò	"	Venus
A' res	"	Mars
A pol' lo	"	Apollo
Ar' te mis	"	Diana

Le' to, mother of Apollo		
and Artemis		Latona
Her' mes	"	Mercury
Ar gei phon' tes, another name of Hermes, generally understood "Slayer-of-Argus"		
He phais' tos	Latin	Vulcan
Di o ny' sos	"	Bacchus
O nei' ros, god of dreams		

The reader is also reminded that Homer has no word meaning "The Greeks." He calls them A chai' ans, Dan' a ans, or Ar' gives as best suits his rhythm in each case, and I have taken the same liberty.

PROPER NAMES OF LEADING ACHAIANS

Ag a mem' non, often called Atreides (son of Atreus)
 Men e la' us, sometimes called Atreides (son of Atreus)
 A trei' dai, includes both, the word being the plural of Atreides
 A chil' les, sometimes called Peleides (son of Peleus)
 Di o me' des, } sometimes called Tydeides (son of Tydeus)
 Di' o med }
 Ai' as, Latin Ajax
 Sthen' e los
 O dys' seus, Latin Ulysses
 Nes' tor
 I dom' e neus
 Phoi' nix, Latin Phoenix
 Kal' chas
 Teu' cer
 Tel' a mon
 Pa tro' klos, Latin Patroclus
 Ai nei' as, Latin Æ ne' as
 E te' o kles
 Pol y nei' kes

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Eu ai' mon
Me ri' o nes
Mel e a' ger
Hel' en
Kly tem nes' tra, Latin Clytemnestra

I have not adhered consistently to the Greek spelling of certain names of which the Latin form is familiar in English, such as Achilles, and Menelaus.

MOST FREQUENT TROJAN NAMES

Pri' am
Hek' a bè, Latin Hecuba
Hec' tor
An dro' ma chè
Par' is
Al ex an' der, Greek name for Paris
Hel' e nos
Po lyd' a mas
An te' nor
A ge' nor
Sar pe' don
Glau' kos
De iph' o bus
Bri se' is (daughter of Bri'seus)
Chry se' is (daughter of Chry'ses)
As ty' a nax, a pet-name given by the Trojans to Hector's son.

HEXAMETER VERSE

I make no apology for an attempt in English to render Homer in his own meter. If there be a reasonable number of readers who like my results, particularly of

readers who are familiar with the rhythm of the original, apology is needless; if not, apology is useless. Some forty attempts at hexameter translation of the *Iliad*, mostly of short passages, have appeared in print, and probably the number is legion that have never seen light; and the literary world has agreed with substantial unanimity that, while a really good rendering in hexameter, if it were possible, would be best adapted to Homer, such rendering not only has not been successful but cannot be — that the verse “is alien to the English language.” A few have agreed with Matthew Arnold who said in substance that the standard forms of English verse are still more alien to Homer, that no translation measurably like the original exists, and that the difficulties with hexameter could be and in time would be so far overcome as to produce a version better than is possible in any other meter. As to one point Arnold was manifestly right, that no standard English rhythm has Homer’s rapidity, and that the ballad rhythms, which in rapidity approach him nearest, lack the quality in style which he calls Homer’s nobleness.

On the main question Arnold’s own specimens of hexameter were much less convincing than his justly celebrated essay; and more than twenty years ago my curiosity was aroused to make a study of the difficulties which had deprived the English-speaking race of the most powerful rhythm ever devised by man, — a meter which among both Greeks and Romans had been a manifest favorite for most literary purposes except the drama; and, beginning with certain well-known pas-

sages, in the midst of an otherwise busy life and with many long interruptions, I gradually translated much more of the *Iliad* than is included in these volumes. It would be a misuse of our mother tongue to say I found it recreation; but the very fact that it was so perplexing and so aggravating, and led to so many mistaken theories which I was obliged to run to earth, prevented my interest from giving way. I do not flatter myself, as one of my predecessors did, that my results will settle the hexameter controversy in its favor; but believing I have done more work, and more persistent work, respecting this form of verse than any other English-speaking person, and that some successor will push the work onward to success, I make for his benefit a few suggestions which would have saved me much labor if known at the outset, and would have led to better results.

The distinction often made between classical and English poetry, that the former is quantitative and the latter accentual, demands close scrutiny or will prove misleading. English verse, like every other verse, is quantitative; for, while less dependent on the quantity of particular syllables and even of particular feet, it must as a whole keep time. Audible speech, combined with pauses of sense or expression, must fill up the time of every line. The very essence of rhythm is time; and our accent marks time but does not make it. English rhythm is greatly helped by its wealth of pauses which correspond to the rest in music; and, while pauses existed in the ancient languages, in both Greek

and Latin called "empty times," and while Quintilian expressly tells us as to the Latin that such pauses add "a time" to the preceding syllable, English has a new and numerous class of pauses requisite to show grammatical relation, — a thing not necessary in an inflected language, — and every form of English verse has taken advantage of them.

Accent plays so large a part in all questions of versification that a word should be said about it, and also about the kindred word *ictus*. By accent English syllabic accent only is referred to.

Accent has at least three elements that do not appear in unaccented syllables, viz., stress, a slightly higher pitch, and more quantity. The two former are due to force, and the latter to control. The difference in quantity is seen in words like "murmur," where two syllables are identical except as to accent; and even when the accent falls on a mute there is still a marked difference, as between the final syllables of *shellac'* and *ip'ecac*. It is worth noticing that the stress element and the quantity element are in the inverse ratio of each other, *i. e.* there is the least lengthening where the stress is greatest, and in words like "beware" where the lengthening is great the stress is correspondingly light. As all audible speech is articulated during expulsion of the breath, the application of force comes from the muscles that "blow the bellows," mainly the abdominal and chest muscles; and if the reader will pronounce the word "accent" slowly enough to observe what takes place he will find that during pronunciation of

the accented syllable the muscles named are under tension while the breath is held back, and that the time given that syllable is under control, (part of it in that particular word inaudible,) and that there is a letting go of the breath and of the muscular tension named during which the unaccented syllable is pronounced. The element of control is so much less after the tension ceases that unaccented syllables are slurred as well as shortened. Accented syllables may be considerably lengthened, without mispronunciation, and in emphasis or other expression regularly are lengthened; and within limits may also be shortened, in which case the stress will be increased. Unaccented syllables are capable of indefinite shortening, but cannot be lengthened much and remain unaccented without a drawl.

Owing to the power of shortening both classes of syllables and of lengthening such as are accented, it may be stated broadly that any accented syllable is long enough, and any unaccented syllable short enough, so that, when placed in the foot where long or short syllables are required, English lines can be read properly and keep time. Dactyls like "far'-darting," "swift'-footed," "crest'-waving," which can hardly be avoided in translating Homer, according to my preconceived ideas I thought must be wrong, yet my ear told me that under certain conditions (to be explained later), they kept time and were right. I reasoned that "dart" was long, which it is, being a noun and accented; but the same letters in "far'-darting," if unaccented are manifestly much shorter; and though the "a" still has the

sound of a *long* it has the *quantity* or *time* of a *short*. Quintilian tells us of the Latin language that "all short syllables are not equally short nor all long syllables equally long, the poets notwithstanding;" and that is probably true of all languages, and is certainly so of English; but they can be made to keep time in hexameter as well as in any other English meter, and both kinds occur in every English meter. The kind of foot above named is certain to occur in any three-syllabled verse; and Scott has "bride'-maidens" in his "Lochinvar," and Byron "rock'-beating" in his "Destruction of Sennacherib" under similar conditions, and the latter at least has always been considered a masterpiece of rhythm; in fact those two short poems contain nearly every peculiarity for which I contend, and for which hexameter has been condemned and declared impossible.

Ictus (literally a "blow") in rhythm means the downward beat that beats its time. In English it is always accent, and the ictus syllable is an accented syllable; but while ictus is always accent, accent is not always ictus. For example in Byron's line,

"When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee,"

the second foot ("wave rolls night-") has all three of its syllables accented, and in fact all are long, but the last of the three is the ictus; and accented syllables which were not ictus-syllables appear to have been frequent in Latin and Greek hexameter. In fact the ictus is not necessarily the heavier accent of the foot, *e. g.*:

"Yet I must think less wildly; — I *have* thought
Too long, etc." ¹

"Have" has the heavy accent of emphasis yet is not the ictus; and such instances are common in other great poets besides Byron. Such occasional irregularities prevent "sing-song" without breaking the reader's sense of the true rhythm.

The nature of the ancient classical ictus has been the subject of much fruitless discussion, one party claiming it was "stress" and the other that it was merely long quantity without stress. It certainly was something which was given the significant name of "a blow," and was a downward beat; and while it was doubtless long in an absolute sense not uniform in English ictus, it could hardly have deserved its name and served its purpose if it were mere length pronounced with a drawl. If the reader will experiment in giving a long pronunciation to unaccented syllables of English words *and keep them unaccented*, and begin and end such syllables so as sharply to show the length (which certainly would be necessary if long pronunciation constituted the ictus), he will at once realize the difficulty of such a supposition. The argument has been complicated by using the word "stress" as if it were synonymous with accent — which it is not; for accent in addition to stress has the capacity to lengthen, and the control necessary to define that length sharply. The question will not be likely to be settled by the obscure and unscientific language of

¹ The italicised word is so printed in the standard edition.

ancient grammarians who were not trying to write for a posterity unfamiliar with the ancient practice, but is above all a scientific and physiological question.

One interesting thing connected with accentuation is that two accented syllables cannot come together without a pause or its equivalent between them to enable the organs to recover themselves; and “‘hunt, hunt’ both accented, will take the same time as ‘hunter, hunt.’” Two consecutive accented monosyllables therefore make in English hexameter as perfect a spondee as can be found in any language. In the line

“ Thus then all day long till the sun sank down to his setting,”

the first, second, and fourth feet are satisfactory spondees and fully fill out the time of the foot. By equivalent I refer to the fact that where the first accented syllable is a vowel it may end in an obscure e sound (called by elocutionists the *vocule*) which takes the place of a pause or unaccented syllable. Thus, I’ tal’ i am may have the *vocule* sounded after the long I thus, Ie tal i am; but if the distinct I sound is retained throughout there always will be a slight pause between that and the second syllable.

There is one fact in English accent wherein the ancient tongues have an analogy but no complete equivalent, viz., that compound words, both members of which are monosyllables, in speech drop one of the accents to suit the rhythm, and thus may even be accented two ways in the same sentence. For example,

"Roll on', thou deep' and dark'-blue o'cean, roll'," |
yet the col'or of the o'cean is dark-blue'.

Dark-blue shifts its accent simply because it first appears in a series of what in English passes for iambs, and in the second case in an irregular anapæstic series. The accent will not change where the rhythm does not change, as,

"The dark'-blue sea' is dark'-blue al'ways," but if the order be changed to "The dark'-blue sea' | al'ways is' dark-blue'," and "is" is emphasized, the accent shifts again as the rhythm changes from the iambic to the trochaic; but if a pause be made after the emphatic "is," so that the two have the time of another trochee, we again may have dark'-blue. In the same way compounds wherein the first word is a monosyllable, and the second a dissyllable shift the accent to suit the rhythm, "the ar'cher, far-dart'ing Apol'lo" and "the far'-darting ar'cher, Apol'lo" being equally correct. These accentual shifts we make every day unconsciously in common conversation; and if we failed to make them the unrhythmic result would suggest antithesis. Verily we are slaves to rhythm from our youth upwards.

Another marked accentual feature of the English, unlike the classical tongues, is the fact that words ordinarily accented may lose their accent under certain conditions, *i. e.*, where they are repeated actually or in idea, and also where they immediately follow or precede an emphasized word. For example, where Achilles says: —

"Death is alike the doom of him that doth, and doth nothing,"

"Doth, and doth" become a dactyl. So in Longfellow, Evangeline says to the priest that her words must seem idle and meaningless to him, and he responds,

"Daughter thy words are not idle, nor are they to *me* without meaning."

Here "without" loses its accent and "me without" becomes a dactyl. "Like unto" is commonly and properly read as if it were one word accented on the first syllable; yet "without" and "unto" under other conditions may be accented and furnish ictus syllables in verse; and this same double office may be borne by many other words. It does not follow from such a fact, or from the fact that words compounded of two monosyllables may serve as either a trochee or an iambus, and thus in hexameter may form the beginning or end of a dactyl, and standing alone be a satisfactory spondee, that "the English language has no prosody," but only that the ancient prosody was less flexible than ours; and still less does it follow that taking advantage of that flexibility is a mistake either in hexameter or in other better recognized forms of verse.

English hexameter is subject to two inflexible laws: — first, that every foot must begin with an accented syllable; second, that the several feet properly read must, within the laws of English versification, keep time. The beginning of each foot with an accented syllable involves

no unusual difficulty except as to the first foot of the line, and there, as all monosyllabic connectives, the preposition, the article, and most pronouns and auxiliary verbs, are unaccented, the difficulty is so very great in connected lines that no modern hexameter exists of which I am aware wherein the law is adhered to rigidly; yet there must be adherence or hexameter loses one of its most distinctive characteristics. Personally I have considered that that law must be obeyed at any sacrifice, and in some cases have made sacrifices not to my liking. Accenting a monosyllabic connective at the beginning of a line may sometimes be accomplished properly by an inversion such that it is followed by a legitimate pause, as in the line where Homer says of the horse, Pedasos:—

“Which, though a mortal horse, kept pace with horses
immortal;”

and where Achilles says of his father:—

“And, though mortal himself, for wife they gave him a
goddess;”

and as Kalchas says of quarreling with a king:—

“For, though he smother his wrath for the day, the grudge
he retaineth.”

The word “was” in the first line of Tennyson’s
“Princess,”

“A prince I was, blue-eyed, and fair of face,”

gets its accent in the same way; for if the order had been "I was a blue-eyed prince," "was" would not be accented; and "blue-eyed" would be accented on the first instead of the second syllable. These expedients for throwing the accent, though legitimate, should not be resorted to often enough to become a mannerism. It is doubtless owing to this difficulty in hexameter that modern poetry is almost universally iambic; and poetic phrasing is so little developed in English outside of the iambic form that the hexameter writer gets little help from great authors. Tennyson has given some trochaic verse which involves the same difficulty and is marked with unusual inversions and absence of connectives between lines. In the ballad, "Home they brought her warrior dead," the lines

"Stole a maiden from her place,"

and

"Rose a nurse of ninety years,"

are charming, but the inverted order is compulsory because the use of the article is compulsory. Latin did not have the article; in Homer it is rare, and according to authorities is not found at all, but where it exists in form it was to ancient apprehension a pronoun.

The difficulty of beginning connected lines with an accented syllable without a strained and unnatural effect, — a thing absolutely un-Homeric, — is practically greater than the more theoretical difficulty of failure of lines to keep time from lack of spondees; but the latter is real and serious. It can be largely met,

however, by pauses; but it goes without saying that the pauses must be legitimate. The most familiar pauses are those indicated by points of punctuation; but there are many others, due mainly to emphasis, expression, and the necessity of showing grammatical relation, particularly in case of inversions. Thus in the lines,

"But, on the tenth, in the light of the dawn which shineth
for mortals,
Men, with many a tear, brave Hector bore from the city,"
etc.

"Men, with" and "tear, brave," with the pause, manifestly have the full time of a dactyl or true spondee; and the same is true of "Hector," for a pause must follow it to show that Hector is the object, not the subject, of the verb. It may at first thought seem that my proposition proves too much, for in the preceding line, "But, on the | tenth, in the" | we have the three syllables of the dactyl and the pause in addition; but the answer is that we have such power to shorten unaccented syllables, a power we exercise every day in common conversation, that we bring such feet within the requisite time without difficulty. In fact that acceleration of time after pauses I believe to be one main element which gives hexameter its sense of rapidity.

Pauses are legitimate in the following cases, among others: —

1. Wherever a point of punctuation may properly be used.
2. After and sometimes before an emphasized word;

and this includes words which are for any reason expressive, though not commonly regarded as emphatic. Sometimes a succession of words contains so much feeling that a pause may be made after each.

3. Between a noun and its adjective, if the adjective follows the noun. The word "adjective" includes participles and adjective clauses.

4. Between an adverb and verb, if the adverb precedes the verb.

5. To take the place of a word or words that are implied but omitted. For example, in Longfellow's line,

"She was a woman, now, with the heart and hopes of a woman,"

the pause after heart is due to the fact that "of a woman" is omitted, but is as applicable to "heart" as to "hopes." A pause to take the place of an omitted "and" is a more familiar illustration.

6. A pause occurs after a noun which is the object of a verb if it precedes the verb, — and, in general, after a prominent word out of its regular prose order. Such inversion is ordinarily intended to make the word prominent, and the pause heightens its prominence, though the word be not commonly regarded as emphasized. The pause after "Hector," in the line given above, is necessary to show grammatical relation without regard to emphasis, for without a pause, as stated, it would appear to be the subject of the verb. It is perhaps necessary to add that, while some latitude is allowed to the necessities of versification, inversions

should not be made often for the sake of getting a pause to fill out the time; they should be not only rhetorically correct but rhetorically advisable.

7. There are also pauses growing out of the necessities of articulation, resembling what in ancient verse is known as length by position, particularly where a word begins with the same letter as that with which the preceding word ends; the same is true if the two letters have the same sound, as *c* and *k* often do; and a certain amount of length occurs where the letters ending and beginning words do not unite easily — the difference between letters in this respect being considerable. It is a mistake to think that English is entirely without length by position, *i. e.*, because of several united consonants, all sounded, — and the word “length” is an illustration, for the word is undeniably long and the vowel undeniably short; the same is true of “twelfth,” “next” and many other words when under accent.

The question comes up whether, if all these expedients fail, a trochee may still be used for a spondee. I think it may, particularly in the first foot, if it be succeeded by an emphasized word followed by a pause; and if the line be divided in the third foot by a pause it is admissible under the same conditions in the fourth foot, or at all events is least objectionable when so placed. In Byron’s “Sennacherib,” of twenty-four lines there are ten anapæsts short a syllable, nine of them the first foot, and the tenth helped by a pause; and I, at least, do not regard the loss of the syllable a defect. In translating Homer there are cases where a trochee

cannot be avoided and yet maintain the simple style of the original, as where his mother sees Hector dragged at the chariot of Achilles, and Homer says she

“Tore her hair, and the glittering veil cast wildly from off her.”

“Tore her hair” is a phrase that has no simple equivalent, but the short foot can be placed at the beginning of the line, and its phrasing be given a sort of anapæstic movement (similar to that after the masculine cæsura) so that the loss of time is not felt. It will be noticed that the mind does not dwell on the first two words of that line, but on the third; and after “hair” comes a pause which fills out the time, and measurably satisfies the ear. It is like the case in music where the time is accelerated in one measure and retarded in the next; and is precisely the liberty taken by solo singers to give proper expression to words and fit the phrasing. In Gray’s “Elegy” nothing is more impressive than the pauses; and, — as the measure is iambic yet many of the feet consist of two syllables, both short and unaccented, — pauses are imperative; yet theoretically many of them do not lengthen the short foot, but lengthen the time of the line outside the foot, yet are satisfactory for all that. In the line

“The pride of her | aldry, | the pomp of power,”

the last two syllables of “heraldry” make a foot but, audibly speaking, a short one; yet the pause, coming

directly after, gives the preceding syllable its proper iambic time; but in the line,

“Await alike th’ inev | ita | ble hour,”

the short foot has its time made up in the succeeding foot by the pause after “inevitable.” In the line

“The paths of glory lead | but to | the grave,”

the time is made up by a short but dramatic pause between the two short syllables of the foot, *i. e.*, after “but.” In the line,

“Nor grandeur view | with a | disdainful eye,”

the pause comes after disdainful, *i. e.*, in the second foot after the defective iambus, “with a.” It will be understood that I am not criticising Gray’s “Elegy.” It is no doubt worth noticing that even the iambic meter is so far “alien to the English language” that its masterpieces cannot maintain it without a license not permitted in Greek tragedy, but I am pointing out that, by the use of pauses, and pauses used with considerable latitude as to position, deficiencies in time can be made up in a way to satisfy the English ear.

In addition to the two laws named there are certain conventionalities of the verse, of which the following are the most important:—

CÆSURA. The principle of the ancient cæsura is applicable in English, but practically is much modified by the fact that we have so many unaccented words and

syllables, which unite in speaking with the preceding word as absolutely as if they were part of it, that a practical cæsura may occur at the end of a word. The same consideration largely obviates the objection to the feminine cæsura in the fourth foot, though the principle of the objection remains unaltered. Homer himself admits the feminine cæsura there if followed by an enclitic or unimportant word.

RHYTHMICAL POSITION OF PAUSES. Pauses play a large part in all verse, but are peculiarly important in the long line of the hexameter, and evidently were much studied by the ancients; and the ancient rules are unchanged in English both in principle and practice. A pause may come in the division of any foot except the last, and at the end of any foot except the third; and at the end of the second and fourth foot, one or both, pauses have a positively good effect, — but I have found the placing of them there rather difficult. The pause that is most rhythmical and gives hexameter its character is one at a division of the third foot, and at least three lines out of five should be so divided; those next in order of excellence divide or come at the end of the second or fourth foot, or both; and either or both may be combined happily with the pause dividing the third foot above named. It goes without saying that a pause at other admissible places should be adopted if the natural phrasing of the translation brings them there; and if not too numerous, they tend to an agreeable variety. The main pause of the line at the *end* of the third foot, thus dividing the line into two equal parts,

has a peculiarly deadening effect on the rhythm, since variety in the movement is thus prevented; but there are some half dozen instances even of that in the *Iliad* itself, and my translation has about as many.

To a person with the natural swing of hexameter in his head the pause dividing the third foot is the easiest to accomplish, and produces the best line, but herein lies a great danger, — the danger of monotony; for a long succession of such lines has an almost hypnotic effect, owing to the very power of the rhythm. Variety in the arrangement of dactyls and spondees, though desirable, in itself, is wholly insufficient to cure this difficulty, the only efficient remedy being variety in the position of pauses. Examination of Homer and Virgil shows that they were fully alive to this, and broke the rhythm in about three lines out of ten. Unless the importance of this danger is understood in advance, when variety can be introduced at the outset and, if desired in comparatively unimportant lines, any successor will find himself under the disagreeable necessity of taking lines which seem to him individually good and deliberately making them worse. I say this with feeling, for such has been my own experience.

I will venture to add a word not germane to the discussion above, but which bears upon the general question of translating Homer. As to Homeric epithets I think Homer expressed, omitted, and varied them to suit his rhythm, and that a translation may do the same and yet be faithful to the original. As to the question of following the Homeric order of words and succession

of phrases I recommend a compromise, but one consistent with good English and the marked perspicuity of the original; and also a compromise as to whether a line-for-line translation be maintained. It is to be considered that the Homeric vocabulary contains a large proportion of long words such that many of his lines consist of four, five or six, and therefore they seem much more condensed than the English line which contains twice as many words though with the same total number of syllables. Four lines of Homer can often be compressed into three English lines without sacrificing any of the sense, and the translator must decide in each case whether the result is Homeric or not. I have often condensed where it was easy to do so, particularly in passages which I deemed spurious; though more frequently I have omitted such passages altogether. Sometimes the exigencies of the verse will require the suppression of something in the text, in which case the omission should be of something unimportant; and sometimes something must be added, in which case the addition must be colorless, or perhaps better something which more fully brings out the meaning of the original.

How far a translation of Homer should conform to modern conventional poetic style is a more difficult question, on which Arnold's essay and the preface to Cowper's translation may throw some light. Homer himself is so deficient in figures of speech and in anything fanciful, either in thought or expression, that respectable authorities claim that he is rhythmical but not poetical, and he certainly seems to express himself

in the simplest and most direct way possible, and to have relied for his effects on dramatic situations and the plain expression of the elemental passions of the race. Mere descriptions of common events, and in particular speeches and dialogues, would seem to require plain vernacular English, and the latter such as would be natural to the situation and the character of the person speaking. Personally I feel that Homer's lines are so far poetical, his plainness notwithstanding, that a translation should be such that the reader will feel that he is reading poetry; yet every temptation to what is called fine writing should be suppressed rigorously. What Homer would do if he were rendering his lines in English hexameter, holding the same views as to style that he had when alive, yet designing to convey the most correct impression of his work to an alien race, requires a man of Homeric genius to answer, yet the translator must ask himself that question and answer it as best he may; and the problems he would like to present to such ultimate authority will be many.

Hexameter is no more alien to the English language than any other Greek meter, and its difficulties are to be met in very much the same way. In a certain sense every meter is alien to every language, and imposes its own limitations of vocabulary and phrasing. The limitations of rhyme are very great, but it hardly deserves to be called alien because it is difficult. It should not be forgotten that Homer and Virgil actually give a wrong quantity to syllables of certain words (which amounts to mispronunciation of them) in order to use them in

their own hexameter, and that both have feet theoretically short in time and long in time, and that Virgil, at least, was thoroughly dissatisfied with much of his own composition. I should regret to know that Homer or any other great poet was not dissatisfied; and if we did but know it I surmise we should find that both Homer and Virgil regretted that many of their short syllables were not shorter and long syllables longer, and that verse limitations prevented the use of words and phrases better than those we find.

We also know that hexameter in its early stages was deemed alien to the Latin language, and have reason to believe it had gone through a long perfecting process before Homer undertook it in Greek. There is no doubt it is difficult in English, extremely difficult, largely, I believe, because it has been so little cultivated, and any person who attempts it should know at the outset that he undertakes no holiday task; but he should also consider that there is no mathematical impossibility about it, that what is not mathematically impossible is not impossible at all, and that the English-speaking race will never have in their own tongue a real reproduction of Homer in any other meter.

Much of this introduction, and many of the notes, are very elementary; but it is to be considered that every new generation has everything to learn.

In this translation I have mainly followed the text of D. B. Monro, but in addition wish to acknowledge my great indebtedness to Leaf's *Iliad*, which has been a valued companion ever since it was published.

HOMER'S ILIAD

^ x / x x / x x ✓ x/
SING, O goddess, the song that tells of the WRATH
OF ACHILLES —

Wrath to Achaians accursed, and fraught with sor-
rows unnumbered:

Many a mighty soul to Hades it hurried untimely,
Many a hero dead made prey to dogs, and a banquet
Fed to the birds of air, — but the will of Zeus was
accomplished: —

Take up the song where first that great twain parted
in quarrel,
Even Atreides, of heroes the lord, and Achilles the
godlike.

Which of the gods led on these twain to strife so
momentous?

Leto's and Zeus's son,¹ for he, in wrath at the
captain,

¹ The son of Zeus and Leto was Apollo, whose arrows were supposed to cause the death of men who died otherwise than by violence. Hence he is called "far-darter" and "far-smiter." His sister Artemis in like manner caused the death of women; and she has the epithet "arrow-delighting." Homer does not connect them with the sun and moon as was done in later mythology.

Pestilence sent on the Danaan host, — 't was deadly
and noisome, —
Seeing that Chryses, his priest, had been by Atreides
dishonored, —
Chryses, who came where the galleys were beached,
the Argive encampment,
Seeking his daughter's release, and he brought for it
ransom unstinted;
Also the fillets he bore of the dread destroyer,
Apollo,
Twined on a scepter of gold, and much he prayed the
Achaïans
All, but chiefly the generals twain, the royal
Atreidai,
Saying: — "Ye sons of Atreus, and all ye mail-clad
Achaïans,
Yours be grace from the gods who abide in Olympian
mansions
Priam's proud city to plunder, and sail for your
homesteads rejoicing,
So ye restore me the daughter I seek, and consent to
a ransom,
Doing observance in me to my lord, far-smiting
Apollo."

Prompt assent was shouted by all the other Achaïans,
Both to respect the priest and receive the magnifi-
cent ransom:

Only one was unmoved, and he, Agamemnon
Atreides,
Roughly denied him, and sent him away, and stern
was his bidding: —

“Let me not find thee again, old man, by our ships
and encampment,
Either lingering now, or hither returning here-
after,
Lest no longer the staff of thy god and his fillets pro-
tect thee.
Her will I never release; old age shall come on her
sooner
Yonder in Argos, at *my* house, afar from the land of
her fathers,
Walking her task at the loom, and serving my couch
as attendant.
Off with thee! anger me not! begone, and the sooner
the safer!”

Thus he spake, and the old man feared, and shrink-
ing departed,
Silently wending his way by the shore of the boister-
ous ocean;
But, when alone and far from the camp he, in out-
burst of passion,
Prayed to his master, Apollo, the son of lovely-
haired Leto: —

"Lord of the silver bow, whose might great Chrysa
bestrideth,
Also Killa the sacred, who Tenedos mightily rulest,
Smintheus, if ever I reared to exalt thee a conse-
crate temple,
Ever in years far spent, have savory offerings
burned thee,
Haunches of bullocks and kids, accomplish this my
entreaty:—
Lives let the Danaans pay for my tears, thy shafts
my avengers."

Thus he entreated in prayer; and, hearing him,
Phoibos Apollo
Down from the heights of Olympos came rushing,
hot with resentment,
Bow slung over his shoulders, and well-stocked
quiver beside it;
Direfully rattled the arrows thus borne on his
shoulder, as onward
Moved the god in his anger; and dark he came as
the nightfall.
Then, apart from the ships, he sate him down, and
his arrows
Sped, and dire was the whirr and the twang of the
bolt and the bowstring.
Mules in the camp, and light-footed dogs, at first
were his victims;

Then he turned to the men, and a shaft keen-pointed
and bitter
Levelled, and smote; and pyres of the dead were
constantly burning.

Nine days' time on the host fell the pestilent shafts
of Apollo,
But, on the tenth, an assembly was called by Achilles,
for Hera
Prompted the thought in his heart in her grief for
the Danaans dying;
So, when the soldiers accordingly met, and had
packed the assembly,
Straightway Achilles arose, and spake mid the
Danaans, saying: —

“Bootless, as things now are, I ween we shall start,
O Atreides,
Back on our homeward voyage, if death, that is, be
avoided,
Now that a pestilence added to war is wasting the
army.
Up, then! Brook no delay! let us ask some priest,
or a prophet,
Aye, or expounder of dreams — for of dreams, too,
Zeus is the sender —
One who may haply interpret this scourge from
Phoibos Apollo,

Whether neglect of a vow be the cause, or a hecatomb wanting.

Haply the savor of rams and kids unblemished, if offered,

He will be pleased to accept, and stay this pestilence for us."

Thus spake Achilles and seated himself, when mid the assembly

Kalchas arose, son of Thestor, the greatest far of the augurs,

Seer who knew all that was, or would be, or had been aforetime,

Also had guided the Danaan fleet to Ilios safely, All by a knowledge divine, the gift of Phoibos Apollo.

He, then, earnest to aid, spake out and answered him, saying:—

"O Achilles, thou bidd'st me, thou gifted of Zeus, as a prophet

Tell what meaneth this wrath of my far-smiting master, Apollo.

I will, therefore, make answer, so thou but promise, and swear it,

Swiftly, and failing me not, by word and hand to defend me.

Bitter offense, I ween, I shall give to a hero who ruleth Widely over the Argives, and all the Achaians obey him.

Mightier far is a king when in strife with one who is subject;
For, though he smother his wrath for the day, the
grudge he retaineth,
Thirsting for vengeance; so ponder it well if thou
wilt protect me."

Then, in eager rejoinder, responds swift-footed
Achilles: —

"Courage! and tell without fear whatever thou
knowest of warning.

Yea, by Zeus-loved Apollo I swear, the god whom
thou prayest,

Kalchas, and after declarest the warnings of heaven
to the Argives,

No man, while I am alive and a dweller on earth,
shall molest thee,

None of the Danaans all, not e'en if thou mean'st
Agamemnon,

Him, who by power of command, is greatest far of
Achaïans."

Then, by assurance emboldened, outspake the
prophet unerring: —

"Neither for vow unperformed is he wroth, nor for
hecatomb wanting,

No, but because of his priest whom King Agamem-
non dishonored,

Neither restoring the daughter, nor taking an adequate ransom.

That 's why Apollo is sending us woes, and still will he send them:

Never, I say, will he stay for us Danaans pestilence noisome

Not till we give as a gift to her sire the rolling-eyed damsel

Taking nor ransom nor price, and carry a hecatomb sacred

With her to Chrysa; then offerings due may haply appease him."

Faithfully Kalchas had spoken, and down he sat, when amid them

Rose the hero Atreides, the wide-ruling king, Agamemnon,

Both eyes blazing like fire, and his black heart bursting with passion.

Casting at Kalchas an ominous glare, he angrily answered:—

"Prophet of ill! thou hast never for me spoken word that is helpful.

Always to prophesy evil delighteth thy heart, and thou never,

Never one cheerful word hast breathed, nor wrought its fulfilment.

This time thou tellest the Danaans here, as message
from heaven,
How that for this, aye for this, the far-smiter work-
eth them evil,
Merely that I was not pleased to accept for the dam-
sel Chryseis
Notable gifts, but preferred at my camp-fire the
girl to the ransom.
Reason enough for my choice; why, I rate her before
Klytemnestra,
Wedded wife though she be, for the girl is nowise
below her
Either in beauty or mien, nor in natural gifts nor
acquirements.
Yet for all that will I give the girl back if conditions
demand it;
Only for me get a prize, and at once,¹ that alone of
the Argives

¹ It seems to be assumed by many that Agamemnon was altogether unwarranted in his demand to be reimbursed for his loss at once; but he was losing what was deemed his property for the benefit of the community by a kind of moral "eminent domain." When property is taken by eminent domain even to-day the owner is entitled to immediate recompense at common law, and is given damages if obliged to wait. Achilles seems to recognize Agamemnon's right, but claims that under the circumstances it was inexpedient to enforce it, which was true. The trouble with both men was that they lost their temper.

I may not go unrewarded, — a thing altogether
unseemly, —

Now that you all see this, that my first prize is
otherwise going."

Then, in impatient rejoinder, replied swift-footed
Achilles: —

"O Atreides, most noble, but most avaricious¹ of
all men,

How can the givers, the Danaans bold, a new prize
award thee?

Knowledge of hoards have we none, stored away
and still lying in common,

No, but the booty from cities laid waste hath all
been divided,

And to recall it again, is nowise fair to the army.

Come, now, honor the god and surrender the girl;
we Achaians

Threefold and fourfold our debt will repay when
the opulent city,

Troy, in fullness of time, Zeus giveth our forces to
plunder."

¹ Here Achilles made his first mistake. The usual formula
in addressing Agamemnon was

"O Atreides, most noble, thou king of men, Agamemnon,"
but Achilles ends his line with a personal reflection accusing
his leader of greed; and in the quarrel that follows the reader
will see that Achilles was far from blameless, though our
sympathies are with him, all things considered.

Straightway, in bitter retort, responded the king,
Agamemnon: —

“Not thus, great as thou art, and godlike in presence,
Achilles,

Play the thief in thy heart; thou wilt *not* overreach
nor persuade me.

Would'st thou thine own prize keep, while I sit ab-
ject without one?

Nay, if the Danaans substitute give, I accept if it
suit me;

But — if they give it not, then I in person will take
one, —

Either thine own, or Aias's prize, or that of Odys-
seus, —

Her will I seize for myself, nor heed the wrath of the
loser.

Still, this question can wait to be settled hereafter;
what presseth

Now is to launch a ship on the sea divine, and for
oarsmen

Gather such as are fit, and a hecatomb ship, and
aboard her

Make to embark for her sire the damsel, fair-cheeked
Chryseis.

Over the ship let a hero of counsellor rank be the
captain,

Such as Idomeneus is, or Aias, or godlike Odys-
seus,

Aye, or thyself, son of Peleus, of all mankind the
most dreadful,
So, and by princely sacrifice made, to appease the
destroyer."

Then, with a louring front, replied swift-footed
Achilles: —

"'Sdeath! in effrontery clad, and with heart avari-
cious and crafty!

How will any Achaian have heart in obeying thy
orders,

Either to go on a march or with foemen mightily
battle?

Surely hither I came not to fight with the warriors
of Troyland

Owing to personal wrong, for they never in any wise
wronged me;

Never, I say, have they harried my cattle, neither
my horses,

No, nor ever in Phthia, that deep-soiled breeder of
heroes,

Fruitage nor crops have they wasted, for vast is the
reach intervening,

Even shadowy mountains, and broad seas roaring
and tossing;

Nay, it was thou whom we followed, thou shameless
ingrate, for *thy* gain,

Seeking redress and renown for Menelaus and, dogface,
Also for thee, from the Trojans, and this thou forgettest and care not.

Now thou threatenest, even, to rob me, lawlessly
rob me,

Seizing the gift which the army assigned for my
manifold labors.

Never do I have a prize that equalleth thine when
Achaïans

Capture a populous town, a stronghold rich of the
Trojans.

Ever the brunt of the toil, the achievements of arduous
battle,

My hands effect, but of booty, whene'er time comes
to divide it,

Thy share is manifold greater, but I with a little and
dear one

Go my way to the ships outworn by toil and by
fighting.

Straight to Phthia go I, thus ill-treated! surely
't were better

Take my ships and go home, not stay here winning
thee riches."

Prompt was the haughty reply of the king of men,
Agamemnon: —

"Flee, and flee freely, if such be thy impulse; I do
not ask thee

Here to tarry for my sake, for I have others beside thee
Ready to care for mine honor, and all-wise Zeus is
the chiefest.

Hateful, no other so much so, art thou of the Zeus-
nurtured princes,

Seeing that ever is strife thy delight, and contention
and battle.

Mighty, indeed, thou art, for the gods are mysteri-
ous givers.

Go straight home with thy ships and, taking thy
following with thee,

Over the Myrmidons lord it, but I to thee am no
vassal —

Storm all thou pleasest, it moveth me not; and,
moreover, I warn thee

This, that as I am deprived of Chryseis by Phoibos
Apollo,

Her in a ship of my own, and my own attendants
escorting,

Back will I send, and will seize in her stead thy fair-
cheeked Briseis,¹

¹ Where a municipality owes a debt and fails to pay, it has been held that the amount can be collected from an individual member of the municipality. Agamemnon's argument is in substance: "You say the army has nothing in reserve wherewith to recompense me, and to call all the booty in for a new division is unfair. I take you at your word, and will enforce recompense against an individual by taking his prize; and as you have been so insolent I will take yours." In the three lines that follow Agamemnon appears at his worst.

Going myself to thy quarters, that loss of thine own
prize may teach thee
How I am greater, far greater than thou, and as
warning to others
Fancying they are my equals, who dare attempt to
outface me."

Speechless with rage was Achilles, and sternly his
heart was debating,
Half resolved his falchion keen to draw from its
scabbard,
Send the bystanders flying, and make short shrift of
Atreides.
While, with his blade half bared, the purpose was
growing, Athena
Came on the scene from heaven, for white-armed
Hera had sent her,
Seeing she loved them both, and for both was equally
heedful.
Up she came from behind, and the golden hair of
Achilles
Grasped, appearing to him, but was seen by none of
the others.
Sorely amazed he turned him about, and straight-
way Achilles
Recognized Pallas Athena, her keen eyes awfully
gleaming.

Breaking the silence, in wingèd words he spake to her, saying:—

“Why here again, thou daughter of Zeus, dread lord of the aegis?

Is it to witness the insults of Agamemnon Atreides? This thing I tell thee, and nothing conceal, is ripe for fulfilment,

E'en that the hour is at hand when death shall end his presumption.”

Then, for answer, responded the goddess, bright-eyed Athena:—

“Come to quell this thy purpose am I, so thou yield to persuasion,

Even from heaven; for Hera, the white-armed goddess, hath sent me,

Seeing she loveth you both, and for both is equally heedful.

Cease from thy deadly design, nor draw thy sword from its scabbard;

But, an thou wilt, taunt the man with the shame that in truth shall betide him:

Lo, this assurance I give thee as even shall be the fulfilment:—

Threefold and fourfold, hereafter, the glorious gifts he shall give thee,

Making amends for his insult; so govern thyself and obey us.”

Then, in awe-struck rejoinder, Achilles answered
her, saying:—
“Needs must I yield me, goddess, and honor the
bidding of you twain,
Inwardly wild though my fury may be, for that will
be wisdom;
Whoso obeyeth the gods, to him do they graciously
hearken.”

Ceasing, his heavy hand he laid on the sword-hilt
of silver,
Back in its sheath once more drave the mighty
brand, and Athena's
Words did he not disregard; and she started off for
Olynpos,
Seeking the gods and the dwelling of Zeus, dread
lord of the aegis.

Then Achilles again, and in words of bitterest
sarcasm,
Scoffed at Atreides, and nothing withheld of his hot
indignation.

“Wine-bibber, doglike in front, but with no more
pluck than a deer,
Never thy soul beareth up to arm with thy people
for battle,

Neither to go to an ambush with chieftains who lead
the Achaians;

No, for in deeds like these, it is death thou facest,
and dare not.

Much more profit, thou thinkest, to range our wide-
spread encampment

Wresting away men's prizes from such as oppose
thee in counsel.

People-devouring king! because those people are
abject!

Otherwise now, O Atreides, for aye were thine in-
solence ended.

This thing I tell thee straight, and by solemn oath
will confirm it:

Yea, by this scepter I swear, as it never shall leaf-
lets nor branches

Put forth again, now it once hath been lopped from
its stem in the mountain,

No, and shall bloom no more; for the axe hath ut-
terly stripped it

Both of its leaves and bark; and now our leaders in
council

Bear it when sitting in judgment, — the men who
guard the traditions

Sanctioned by Zeus, so thou seest the oath I am
taking is sacred, —

Verily, soon will Achilles be missed by the Argives,
and longed for,

Yea, by them all, and then — thou canst not, how-
ever repentant,
Save them when multitudes fall by the hand of man-
slaying Hector,
Done to their death; aye, then wilt thou rend the
soul that is in thee,
Ruining the day when thou foully entreated the fore-
most Achaian."

Thus spake the son of Peleus, and angrily casting
his scepter ¹
Studded with rivets of gold to earth, down sat him
abruptly.
Over against him Atreides sat hot with resentment,
when mid them
Sweet-spoken Nestor arose, a clear-voiced speaker
from Pylos,
Forth from whose gifted tongue flowed speech that
was sweeter than honey —
One in whose day, already, had men of two genera-
tions
Born in Pylos the sacred and reared to vigorous
manhood

¹ When a man was to speak in a Homeric assembly a her-
ald placed a scepter in his hand, and this he held during his
speech as showing that he was entitled to the floor. When,
therefore, Achilles threw his scepter down he not merely ex-
pressed anger, but, as it were, said: "I have spoken my last
word." He does in fact speak again, not formally taking the
floor, however, but as Homer puts it, "interruptingly."

Perished and passed away, and over the third was
he ruling, —
He, to settle the quarrel, spake earnestly, saying,
amid them:—

“Great, alas, is the woe that hath come on the land
of Achaia!
Verily Priam would glory and Priam’s sons be
exultant,
Aye, and the rest of the Trojans be greatly exalted
in spirit,
Granting they heard all this, that you two men were
a wrangling —
You whom the Danaans look to for counsel, and
follow in battle.
Come, now, listen to me; you both are younger
than I am:
Listen, for I in my time have warriors greater than
you are
Met as an equal, and never did they, even they
disregard me.
Men have I never seen so great as they, no, nor shall
see,
Such as Peirithoös was, and Dryas, his people’s
defender,
Kaineus, Exadios too, and the godlike man Poly-
phemos:

Mightiest, surely, were they of men who on earth
were the dwellers,

Mightiest both in themselves and fought 'gainst
the mightiest also,

Monsters that dwelt in the mountains, and dealt
them a direful destruction.

Even, I say, with these I consorted, coming from
Pylos,

Far from a land remote, for they had sent to invite
me:

Nevertheless I held independent command; but in
fighting

No one of earthly men, as men now are, could con-
front them,

Yet to my counsels they hearkened nor left my sug-
gestions unheeded.

Come, friends, heed me as they did, for sound is my
counsel and wholesome:

Do not, Atreides, great as thou art, deprive of his
mistress

One who for merit received her by public acclaim
of the army;

Neither do thou, Peleides, persist in affronting thy
sovereign;

Sceptered kings exalted of Zeus are matchless in
honor.

Mighty, indeed, thou art, and a goddess the mother
that bare thee,

Yet is he greater of place, for more are the people
he ruleth.

Also, Atreides, subdue thy spirit — 't is I who
beseech thee;

Quell for Achilles thy reasonless rage, for he is a
bulwark

Set for a mighty defence in our days of desperate
warfare."

Then to the veteran sage responded the king,
Agamemnon: —

"True as is fate, old man, is every word thou hast
spoken,

Only this fellow is bent on taking the lead of all others,
Seeketh to trample on all, and over the whole of us
lord it,¹

Lay down the law to his betters as well, and, for
one, I submit not.

Granted a spearman strong the gods immortal have
made him,

Have they by that given license to mouth his insults
unbridled?"

Here, interrupting, Achilles brake in, and answered
him, saying: —

"May I be known as the veriest coward, and utterly
abject,

¹ Both parties have at this point become so angry that words take the place of ideas.

If unto thee, forsooth, I yield as to all that thou sayest.
Unto others, I say, give orders, but unto me, never.
One thing more I assure thee, and bid thee ponder
its meaning:

No hand of mine shall be raised to fight in behalf of
the damsel,

Neither with thee nor another, — the givers are they
that deprive me, —

But, of the rest of the wealth which I have by my
swift, black galleys,

Nothing thereof shalt thou carry therefrom despite
my objection.

Ay, now, come and attempt it, and let these by-
standers see us:

Speedily thy black blood about my spear shall be
gushing."

Thus did the great twain wrangle and, after these
bitter revilings,

Rose and dissolved the assembly which sat by the
Danaan shipping.

Back to his quarters and stately ships departed
Achilles,

Taking Menoitios' son and his personal following
with him:

And, as he promised, Atreides a swift ship launched
on the billows,

Twenty rowers selected to man her, a hecatomb also

Put on board for the god, and leading fair-cheeked
Chryseis
Placed her thereon; and as captain went also crafty
Odysseus.

They, then, having embarked, set sail on their
watery pathway,
But, of the people, Atreides commanded a purification.
They his orders obeyed, and cast the filth in the ocean;
Also unto Apollo they sacrificed hecatombs perfect,
Bullocks and goats, by the shore of the verdureless
sea ; and a savor
Sweet rose up into heaven in the smoke of sacrifice
offered.

Busied, thus, were the Danaan host; but King
Agamemnon
Nowise forgot the reprisal wherewith he had threatened Achilles:
So he Talthybios called and despatched Eurybates
with him,
Men who, then, for their king were heralds and
faithful attendants:—

“Hie ye twain to the camp of the son of Peleus,
Achilles,
And, there taking the hand, bring hither fair-cheeked
Briseis.

Should he surrender her not, then I in person will
take her,
Going with retinue greater, and bitterness add to
the insult."

Thus he said, and sent them away, and stern were
his orders;
So, they, along by the shore of the verdureless sea,
and unwilling,
Went, and anon drew nigh to the Myrmidons' bar-
racks and shipping.
Sitting in front of his camp and swift black galley
they found him,
Nor, be sure, was the sight a pleasant sight to Achilles.
Struck with alarm for the moment, and full of re-
spect for the chieftain,
Halted the twain, and said never a word, neither
ventured inquiry —
All which Achilles divined, and courteously spake
to them, saying: —

"Hail to ye heralds, of Zeus and of men the mes-
sengers sacred!
Forward, and fear not! not you I blame, but your
king, Agamemnon,
Him by whom ye were sent in quest of the damsel,
Briseis.
Ho, there, Zeus-born Patroklos! bring forth the
damsel, and yield her

Up to the charge of the heralds; and be ye heralds
my witness,
Both in the sight of the heavenly gods and perishing
mortals,
Aye, and in sight of this ruffian king, when hereafter
there cometh
Need of me to turn from the host disgrace and disaster.
Surely the man is mad, and his reason bewitched
and bewildered;
Lo, he hath not the wit to look both forward and
backward,
Planning the means for the Danaan host to battle
in safety."

Thus he spake, and Patroklos, obeying his dearly-
loved comrade,
Led without from the camp fair-cheeked Briseis,
and gave her
Into their charge; and the heralds twain to the
Argive encampment
Went, and the woman unwilling went with them.
Sadly Achilles
Stole apart, and in tears, and sat down far from his
comrades
Hard by the shore of the sea, and gazed o'er its
limitless pathway.
Lifting his hands, in a passion of prayer he called on
his mother: —

“Mother, seeing thou bore me foredoomed to a
fleeting existence,
Honor, at least, should be mine as due from the lord
of Olympos,
Even high-thundering Zeus, but instead no whit
am I honored
Seeing Atreides, the wide-ruling King Agamemnon,
hath robbed me,
Seizing my prize, — in the pride of his kingdom
hath taken her from me.”

Thus he prayed, and in tears, and the queenly goddess,
his mother,
Heard in the depths of the sea where she sat by her
father, the Ancient.
Rising, as riseth the mist, she emerged from the sea
in a moment,
And, in the midst of his tears, was instantly seated
beside him.
Fondly her hand gave a mother's caress, and she
spake to him, saying: —

“Son, what meaneth thy tears? What sorrow thy
heart hath invaded?
Tell me, and nothing conceal, that both may equally
share it.”

Then, and heavily groaning, outspake swift-footed Achilles: —

“All things thou knowest, so why should I tell thee who knowest already?

Once expedition we made to Thebes, Eëtion's city Sacred, and took it by storm, and hither transported the plunder;

This with fairness the Danaan chiefs divided among them,

Choosing therefrom for Atreides the fair-cheeked maiden, Chryseis.

Chryses, her father, anon, a priest of far-darting Apollo,

Made his way to our circle of ships, the Achaian encampment,

Seeking his daughter's release, and bringing a ransom unstinted.

High the fillets he held of the dread destroyer, Apollo, Twined on a scepter of gold, and much he prayed the Achaians

All, but chiefly the generals twain, the royal Atreidai. Prompt assent was shouted by all the other Achaians, Both to respect the priest, and receive the magnificent ransom;

Only was one unmoved, and he, Agamemnon Atreides,

Roughly denied him and sent him away, and stern was his bidding.

Back on his homeward way went the priest sore
wroth; but Apollo,
Hearkening unto his prayers, for very dearly he
loved him,
Sent on the Argive host his pestilent shaft, and the
people
Perished in rapid succession, for everywhere through
the encampment,
Far and wide o'er the host ranged the arrows of
death; but a prophet,
Ware of the warnings of heaven, made known to us
this of Apollo.
Instant was I and the first to advise a speedy atone-
ment.
Then Atreides with fury was seized and, straight-
way arising,¹
Put a threat into words which hath come to fruition
already:
His prize, embarked on a swift-faring ship, the dark-
eyed Achaians
Now to Chrysa are sending, and carrying gifts to
Apollo;
Mine, just now, away from my tents went heralds
conducting,

¹ It will be observed that Achilles fails to see that he was not blameless in the transaction, and his fond mother assumes at once that he has suffered a great wrong without fault on his part. This is in accordance with the character of both as seen elsewhere.

Even the daughter of Briseus, the gift of my fellow
Achaïans.

Prithee, if able, avenge thy son; go up to Olympos
And, in return for services done, beg Zeus's assistance.
Oft have I heard thee boast in the halls of my father,
and saying

Thou, alone of immortals, had saved him from
grievous dishonor

Once, when the other Olympian gods were earnest
to bind him,

Even Poseidon and Hera, combining with Pallas
Athena.

Then camest thou to his aid, O goddess, and saved
him from binding,

Seeing that promptly thou summoned to lofty
Olympos the giant,

Him of the hundred hands, — by gods named
Briareus, mortals

Call him Aigaion, in might his father Poseidon
surpassing; —

He, by the side of Kronion, sat down in glory
resplendent.

Him, when they saw, the blest gods feared, and from
binding desisted.

Now of thy service remind him, and clasp his knees,
and implore him

Aid to give to the Trojans, and drive the Achaïans
with slaughter

E'en till they cower in their camp, and rate their
king at his value,
Aye, and Atreides may know, his pomp and his
power notwithstanding,
How he was mad when he foully entreated the fore-
most Achaian."

Thetis with fast-flowing tears then said to her son
in rejoinder: —

"Woe is to me, my son! why bore I and reared thee
to sorrow?

O that here by the ships thou wert sitting tearless
and griefless,

Seeing thy life is a span, and the end fast drawing
anigh thee:

Now, not merely short-lived, thou art made the
child of misfortune, —

Such was the evil fate to which in a palace I bore
thee.

Yea, to prefer thy petition to Zeus, great lord of the
thunder,

Going to snow-clad Olympos am I, and seek to per-
suade him.

But, for a time, do thou, staying patiently here by
thy galleys,

Show the Achaians thy wrath by abstaining from
war altogether,

Seeing that Zeus unto Ocean hath gone, for the
Aithiops matchless
Yesterday gave him a banquet, and all the immortals
attend him.
Twelve days hence he returneth again to his home
on Olympos,
When, to the bronze-garnished mansion of Zeus, I
promptly will hie me
There to embrace his knees, and expect to prevail,
and persuade him."

Thus she spake and departed again, and him by the
sea-shore
Left sore angered at heart on account of the fair-
girdled woman.
Never went he even once to the man-ennobling
assembly,
Never once to the war; but his heart kept pining
within him,
Chafed by inaction, and restlessly longed for the
war-shout and battle.

Straightway the twelfth morn came the gods trooped
back to Olympos,
All of them, Zeus at their head; and Thetis forgot
not the promise

Made at behest of her son; so she, in the dawn of
the morning,
Rose from the waves of the sea, and mounted to
heaven and Olympos.
Sitting apart she found dread Zeus, whose voice is
the thunder,
Lone on the loftiest peak of myriad-crested Olympos,
And, before him, she knelt and clasped his knees
with her left hand,
Grasping his beard with her right, and thus Kronion
entreated:—

“Zeus, All-sire, if I ever have aided thee mid the
immortals,
Be it by word or by deed, accomplish this my
entreaty:
Honor do to my son to whom death cometh quickest
of all men;
Yet, hath the king of men, Agamemnon, now in
addition,
Done him dishonor, and taken his prize in sovereign
presumption.
Rise in thy might, dread lord of Olympos! avenge
that dishonor!
Victory grant to the Trojans a space, till the humbled
Achaians
Right the wrong they have done, and my son be
exalted in honor.”

Thus-spake Thetis; but Zeus, the cloud-compeller,
replied not.

Longtime in silence he sat, but her hold on his
knees she relaxed not,

Nay, but the closer she clung, and again the second
time asked him: —

“Promise me now for a surety, and nod thy head to
confirm it,

Else deny me, for fear thou hast none, that my ken
be explicit

How much amid the gods I am most unhonored of
any.”

Greatly disturbed was Zeus, the cloud-compeller,
and answered: —

“Sorry doings ahead! thou wilt drive me into a
quarrel,

Quarrel with Hera, too, who will be more shrewish
than ever.

She, as it is, is always upbraiding me mid the im-
mortals,

Never ceasing to twit me with aiding the Trojans
in battle.

Quick, now, and go straight back, lest Hera some-
how may see thee,

Leaving the issue hereafter to me till all is accom-
plished.

Aye, I grant thee the nod of my head, that thy
heart may be easy;
This, from me, is the mightiest sign amid the im-
mortals,
Seeing that naught so pledged is recalled, or de-
ceiveth, or faileth."

Thus he said, and at once with his black brows
nodded Kronion;
And, from his kingly, immortal head, as he bowed,
the ambrosial
Locks came rippling down; and the nod shook
mighty Olympos.

Thus, their conference over, the two gods parted,
and Thetis
Plunged in the depths of the sea from the shining
heights of Olympos;
Zeus in haste to his house; and the gods from their
seats all together
Rose to their sire as they saw him approach; and
none of them ventured
Sitting to bide him, but stood in courtly observance.
And forward
Came he and seated himself on his throne; but
nowise had Hera

Failed in her watch, but perceived that her husband
and silvery-footed
Thetis, child of the Ancient, had met in counsel
together.

Straightway to Zeus Kronion she called, and be-
rated him, saying: —
“Who once more of the gods hath been ripening
schemes with thee, trickster?
Always thou seekest to plan and decide in secret,
and never
Deignest to tell me a word or a thing till I ferret it
from thee.”

Then, for answer, responded the sire of men and
immortals: —
“Hera, my every word expect not to know, for thou
couldst not,
Wife albeit thou art, understand; but all that befits
thee,
That no god and no mortal shall know any sooner
than thou dost.
What I am pleased to determine apart from the
gods and in secret,
Pry not, I say, into matters like that, nor affront
me with questions.”

Then, for answer to Zeus, spake ox-eyed imperial
Hera: —

“Son of Kronos most dread, what wild and unjust
imputations!

Carefully I have avoided all prying and question
before this,

Yea, thou hast always without interference devised
as it pleased thee:

Yet, for once, am I sorely afraid lest silver-shod
Thetis,

Child of the Sea-god, the Ancient, hath talked thee
around and beguiled thee;

Kneeling and clasping thy knees was Thetis at dawn,
for I saw her,

And, I believe, thou hast pledged by a nod that to
honor Achilles

Many Achaians shall fall, laid low at their very
encampment.”

Then, for rejoinder responded dread Zeus who
ruleth the tempest: —

“Reasonless creature! forever suspecting! spying
me always!

Nothing at all wilt thou gain, but be distinctly the
loser,

Since thou wilt be from my heart still further es-
tranged; and in this case

*If thou art guessing correctly, 't is my good pleasure,
I tell thee!*

*Silence! I say; sit down! and my word obey for
thine own sake,*

*Lest defence there be none from all the gods of
Olympos,*

*When I, drawing anigh, my matchless hands lay
upon thee."*

*Thus he spake; and afraid was ox-eyed imperial
Hera:*

*Down in silence she sat, and schooled her heart to
subjection,*

*While, in the court and the palace of Zeus, reigned
wildest confusion.*

*Wishing to quiet his mother, and taking her part in
the quarrel,*

*First to speak was Hephaistos, the far-famed artisan,
saying: —*

*"Sorry doings, indeed, are in store for us, not to be
suffered,*

*If, in fashion like this, you twain fight merely for
mortals,*

*And, mid the rest of the gods, breed wrangling;
neither will any*

*Sweetness be in the excellent feast, — these quarrels
will spoil it.*

So, my mother I counsel, though she of herself is
most knowing,
Full submission to make to our sire, and study to
please him,
So that he may not fall angry again, and ruin our
banquets.
For, assuming he wished, the Olympian lord of the
lightning
Out of our seats might eject us, for he is the mighti-
est vastly.
Always, therefore, I pray thee, address him with
words of endearment —
Quickly, then, to the rest will Olympian Zeus be
propitious.”

Thus he spake, and forward he sprang, and a two-
handled goblet
Placed in the hands of his mother beloved, and
spake to her, saying:—

“Bear up, mother, thy feelings repress, thy wrath
notwithstanding,
Lest, albeit so dear, thou be flogged, and my eyes
shall behold it;
Save thee I could not, though wroth, for hard is
Zeus to encounter;
Once when I tried to defend thee before he gave me
a lesson —

Seized my foot, and cast me amain from the heavenly
threshold,
So that I flew all the live-long day, and only at sunset
Landed in Lemnos half dead, till Sintian pirates
revived me."

Thus he said; and a smile illumined the face of the
goddess,
Which, suppressing, the cup she received from her
son; and the latter
Then sweet nectar drew from the bowl, and as cup-
bearer acting
Passed it from left to right to all the other immortals;
Then, mid the joyous gods, arose uncontrollable
laughter,
Seeing limping Hephaistos go bustling round through
the palace.

Thus they the whole day long till the sun sank down
to his setting
Feasted, and nothing they lacked which heart could
wish at a banquet,¹
Neither was wanting the beautiful lyre, which was
touched by Apollo,
No, nor the Muses, who answering sang with ravish-
ing voices.

¹ By "equal feast" Homer apparently means that the
feast was equal to the "*θυμὸς*" or desire of the banqueter.

Now, when the sun, that glittering light, had gone
to his setting,
Ready to sleep the gods went home to their several
houses,
All which Hephaistos had made with the cunning
skill of a craftsman.
Zeus, too, went to his bed, the Olympian lord of the
lightning,
Where he had slumbered of old when balmy sleep
overtook him;
Thither he went to his rest, with high-throned Hera
beside him.

BOOKS II-V

Now, all the rest of the gods and earth-born chariot-fighters

Slumbered the whole night long, but sleep, all-conqueror, held not

Zeus in its thrall, — his soul was astir to avenge the dishonor

Done to Achilles, and multitudes slay by the Danaan shipping.

This plan struck him as best, to send Agamemnon Atreides

Dreams of delusion. The dream-god he called, and spake to him, saying: —

“Haste thee, delusive Oneiros, and go to the camp of the Argives,

And, when come to the tent of the king, Agamemnon Atreides,

Tell him, and faithfully tell, this message just as I charge thee:

Bid him set in array, and promptly, the long-haired Achaians,

Seeing that now is his chance to capture the wide-streeted city,

Troy: for the gods who abide on Olympus differ no longer, —

All are won over by Hera — and woes hang over the Trojans."

Thus he said; and away went Oneiros on hearing the message.

Soon he had come to the Danaan ships, and found Agamemnon

Fast asleep in his camp with ambrosial night poured about him.

Over the head of the sleeper he bent in the image of Nestor, —

Sage Agamemnon revered beyond all other advisers; So, in the guise of Nestor, the dream-god called to him, saying: —

"Sleeping! the son of Atreus, that hot-hearted tamer of horses!

Slumbering this way the livelong night ill beseemeth a leader

Trusted with safety of armies, and burdened with duties unnumbered.

I, now, claim thine attention, and Zeus's messenger am I,

Zeus, who bideth far from thee, yet careth and pitieth greatly.

'Arm to-day,' saith Zeus, 'the long-haired Achaians
for battle,
Seeing that now is thy chance to capture the wide-
streeted city,
Troy; for the gods who abide on Olympos differ no
longer, —
All are won over by Hera, — and woes hang over
the Trojans.'
Keep my words in thy heart, and let not forgetful-
ness seize thee,
When from thine eyes departeth the sweet entice-
ment of slumber."

Thus having spoken Oneiros departed, and left
Agamemnon
Dreamer of dreams that would never prove true;
for he fondly expected
Even that self-same day to capture the city of
Priam —
Fool, who divined not the cunning of Zeus, who
still was contriving
Groanings for Trojans and Danaans both in desper-
ate conflict.
Ringing still in his ears was the voice divine as he
wakened;
Bolt upright he sat, and donned his beautiful
tunic,

Fresh and soft, and a mantle large then folded about
him,
Under his tender feet next tied on beautiful
sandals,
Over his shoulders a sword then slung that was
studded with silver,
Lastly the family scepter he seized, an enduring
possession;
Then, this scepter in hand, strode forth to the
Danaan shipping.

Dawn, now, goddess divine, was mounting the
heights of Olympus,
Telling her message of daybreak to Zeus and the
other immortals,
When, to his heralds with ringing voice, Agamem-
non Atreides
Issued command to summon the Argives to meet in
assembly.
So proclamation they made, and soon the people
were gathered.
First, however, a session he called of the council of
elders,
Bidding them meet by the ship of the Pylos-born
veteran, Nestor;
Then, to the meeting, suggested this artful strata-
gem, saying:—

“Hear me, my friends; in the midst of my sleep
came the dream-god Oneiros,
During ambrosial night, and he looked like illustrious Nestor,
Wearing quite closely his shape and his size, and
general bearing.
Over my head he bowed, and softly spake to me,
saying:—
‘Sleeping! the son of Atreus, that hot-hearted
tamer of horses!
Slumbering this way the livelong night ill beseemeth
a leader
Trusted with safety of armies, and burdened with
duties unnumbered.
I, now, claim thine attention, and Zeus’s messenger
am I—
Zeus, who bideth far from thee, yet careth and
pitieth greatly.
Arm this day, saith Zeus, the long-haired Achaians
for battle,
Seeing that now is thy chance to capture the wide-
streeted city,
Troy; for the gods who abide on Olympos differ no
longer—
All are won over by Hera— and woes hang over the
Trojans
Sanctioned by Zeus; be sure to remember.’ Thus
having spoken,

Off went the dream-god fitting away; that moment
I wakened.

Up, then, and aid me to arm for the fray our Danaan
soldiers.

First, however, as test of their steadfastness, I will
advise them

Taking their ships to go home, — 't is legitimate
ruse for the purpose, —

You, then, man after man, rise up and object, and
dissuade them."

When he had spoken and seated himself, the veteran
Nestor,

King of Pylos, arose, and in good faith said to the
council: —

"Friends and leaders in counsel, ye rulers and
princes of Argos,

Granting such dream from Zeus had been told by
another Achaian

We would have deemed it delusion, and never have
acted upon it:

But, in this instance, our king was the dreamer,
Zeus's vicegerent;

Up, then, I say, and in battle array let us marshal
the army."

When he had spoken the council dissolved, and King
Agamemnon
Led the way to assembly, and thither the people
were flocking.
Even as bees from their nest in a rock come buzzing
and busy,
Brisk, multitudinous nations, and new bees come
everlasting,
Flitting in swarms, some this way, some that, for the
flowrets of springtime;
Even so, then, marched squadrons of men from ships
and from barracks,
Seeking the place where assemblies were held, and
crowding the sea-shore.
Mid them, and urging them on, blazed Zeus's mes-
senger, Rumor.

In they gathered, tumultuous, noisy, and earth
underneath them
Groaned as they thronged to their seats; and
heralds, mid the confusion,
Nine in number, were shouting directions and try-
ing to still them,
Bidding them hold their tongues, and hear while
the princes were speaking.
Thus, with effort, they quieted down, and King
Agamemnon

Rose up, holding his scepter, a marvelous work of
Hephaistos:

This to Zeus Kronion he gave, dread ruler of Heaven;
Straightway Zeus to his messenger gave it, the
Argicide, Hermes;

Hermes gave it to Pelops, the chariot-fighter; and
Pelops

Gave it in turn to Atreus, the warrior; Atreus at
dying

Left his successor and brother, Thyestes, the won-
drous heirloom;

This, in turn, Thyestes had left Agamemnon to
carry,

Emblem of rule over many an isle, and the land of
the Argives.

On this scepter he leaned, and spake to the Danaans,
saying: —

“Oh, my friends, ye Danaan heroes, ye servants of
Ares,

Me hath Zeus, son of Kronos, enfettered in crushing
delusion,

Arch-deceiver, who once by a nod most solemnly
promised

I should return to my home with well-fenced Ilios
captured;

Yet, all the time hath he practiced a base deception,
and bids me

Argos seek in disgrace, for sore is the loss of my people.

Such is the pleasure, it seemeth, of Zeus whose might is resistless,

Him who of many a city hath overturned the high-places,

Yea, and will still overturn, for his is dominion supremest.

Shameful it certainly is, and such will posterity deem it,

Knowing an army appointed like ours, so vast in its numbers,

Fooled round fighting a ruinous war, and nothing accomplished, —

Fought against fewer men, nor brought that fight to a finish.

Why, now, if we should desire such a thing, we Achaians and Trojans,

Making a truce for the purpose, to number the people on both sides,

They being counted as men, and we being counted in decades,

Then should wish to select for our cupbearers one of the Trojans,

Cupbearers would n't hold out, and many a decade go thirsty, —

So much, I say, doth the Danaan host outnumber the Trojans,

Those that are dwellers in Troy; but from many
neighboring places
Come allies who are spearmen bold, and utterly
thwart me,
Balking my every wish to plunder the opulent city.
Nine long years of obdurate Zeus have plodded
their circuits,
Leaving our ship-timbers rotted, and slazy the
tackle; and yonder
All this time in our halls sit wives and children in
waiting;
Yet is the work we came hither to do entirely
frustrate.
Up, then, the counsel that *I* give let every man of us
follow:
Back let us flee in our ships to the longed-for land
we were born in,
Seeing bright Troy we shall never take now, that
glorious city."

Thus he said, and their homesick hearts were stirred
with a longing,
All of them, saving the chiefs who had heard his
words in the council.
Wild as Icarian Seas by cross-winds swept in a
tempest,
So their longing was wild, but strong as the billows
of ocean.

Yet, as when west-winds steadily blow o'er a ripening grainfield,
Rushing with furious blast, and the ears bend one way before it,
So to one purpose the people were bent, raised a shout of approval,
Then made a dash for the ships; and the dust flew under their footsteps.
Loudly they called one another to seize the galleys, and drag them
Down to the bright salt sea; and their outcries mounted to heaven, —
Longing for home; and from under the ships they were drawing the timbers.

Then had the Danaans made a return that fate never dreamed of,
Saving that Hera beheld, and said to keen-eyed Athena:—

“Look at them! Look at them, daughter of Zeus, thou goddess untiring!
So the Achaians are going to flee to their homes and their country
Over the sea's broad back, and leave to the Trojans and Priam

Helen of Argos, their boast, for sake of whom many
Achaïans
Yonder in Troyland have perished afar from the
land of their fathers.
Up, then, and haste to the Danaan host! be tactful,
and stop them.
Suffer them nowise to launch on the brine their sea-
going galleys."

Thus she said, and, complying, the goddess, bright-
eyed Athena,
Went at a tearing pace down the heights of lofty
Olympos.
Bold Odysseus she found — and Zeus was not
greater in counsel —
Standing beside his ship, but his hand he laid not
upon it,
Seeing his grief was great; and Athena spake to
him, saying: —

"Zeus-born son of Laërtes, thou much-contriving
Odysseus,
So you Achaïans are going to flee to your homes and
your country,
Tumbling into your ships, and leave to the Trojans
and Priam

Argive Helen to boast of, for sake of whom many
Achaïans
Here in Troyland have perished afar from the land
of their fathers!
Up, now, and go to the Danaan host, not linger a
moment!
Stop each several man, and exhaust thy powers of
persuasion;
Nowise permit them to launch on the brine their
sea-going galleys."

Thus said Athena and, knowing her voice, away
sped Odysseus,
Casting his cloak one side; and his page, Eurybates,
took it.
Straight went Odysseus himself to the king, Agamemnon Atreides,
Took from his hand the scepter ancestral that
bideth forever,
Then, with the scepter, went on to the camp of the
mail-clad Achaïans.

Now, when a king he met, or man of uncommon
distinction,
Him would he flatter in soldierly wise, but admonish
him, saying:—

"Sir, it befitteth not thee to play the part of a coward:

Be an example; sit down, and make the soldiers do likewise.

Nowise thou knowest the real designs of King Agamemnon;

This is a test, a ruse, that only, and vengeance will follow.

Do not we kings, who were there know what took place in the council?

Take care! Kings, vicerents of Zeus, are high-handed; and this one

Holdeth his honor from Zeus, and Zeus, dread Arbiter, loves him."

Otherwise dealt he with men of the people, caught by him shouting: —

Them would he drive with the scepter, with words would roundly rebuke them,

Saying: "Be still, ye caitiffs, sit down and listen to others;

Hearken, I say, to your betters, for you are cowards and weaklings,

Not of the slightest account whether war be the issue or counsel.

We Achaians are not all kings, far from it, ye dullards.

Rule by the many is not a good thing; let one man
be ruler,
One man king, so made by the son of mysterious
Kronos."

Now all the rest sat down, and that, too, in orderly
fashion,
All but Thersites, unmeasured of speech, who kept
up his brawling —
Fellow with mind well stored with scurrilous lan-
guage, and saying
All that came into his head, so it be abusive of
princes,
Such as would breed disorder, and raise a laugh mid
the soldiers.
He was the worst-looking man who came in the
whole expedition:
Bandy-legged, to begin with, and lame of one foot;
and with shoulders
Bowed and bent in on the breast; and above was
this misshapen body
Crowned at the top with a sugar-loaf head just
sprinkled with bristles.
Specially hateful was he to Achilles, and also Odys-
seus —
Those two he always reviled; but now against King
Agamemnon

Railed he with high-pitched voice, for unpopular
now was their leader.

Thus, then, bawling at top of his voice, he assailed
Agamemnon: —

“What in the world, Atreides, dost thou want
further, what gape for?

Full of bronze are thy quarters, and many women
are in them,

Picked ones, gift of the soldiers, whenever we capture
a city.

Ah! it may be thou art short of gold still, which a
Trojan will bring thee

Seeking to ransom a son whom I, or some other
Achaian,

Capture and bring here, or haply another young
girl for thy pleasure.

Ill it beseemeth commander like thee, this shabby
maltreatment.

Soldiers, disgrace to the name! ye women, not men
of Achaia!

Let us take ship and go home, nothing less, and
leave Agamemnon

Here at Troy, to gobble up prizes, and haply to
teach him

Whether we, also, are some sort of good, or nowise
assist him.

Just now Achilles, his better by far, he hath foully
entreated,
Taking the prize we assigned him without any
sanction of ours.
Surely Achilles was not overwroth, nay, lacking in
spirit,
Else, O Atreides, this insult of thine were the last of
the series."

While he thus was declaiming, and railing at King
Agamemnon,
Soon Odysseus was nigh, and with stern look sharply
rebuked him,
Saying: — "Thersites, licentious of speech, though
a very glib talker,
Keep to thy place, and be not so forward to vilify
princes,
Seeing a fellow more worthless than thou came not
with the army.
Therefore harangue not with kings in thy mouth,
and by scurrilous language
Plot for return; for no man can know and be sure
of the issue,
Whether return for the Danaan host were for good
or for evil.
One thing I do know is sure, and outright now will I
tell it:

Ever again if I catch thee thus playing the fool, as
at present,
Then may the head no longer remain on the trunk
of Odysseus,
Never again be I called Telemachos' father, unless I
Strip thy raiment from off thee, thy tunic and
cloak, and expose thee
Naked, and drive thee, howling with stripes, from
out the assembly."

Thus he said; and the scepter of gold brought
heavily downward,
Smiting the wretch, who writhed, and the big tear
fell, and a bloody
Weal rose up his shoulders between, where the
scepter had hit him.
Smarting, and wiping his eyes, with a silly look he
subsided.
Even the soldiers, though grieved at the issue,
could n't help laughing;
Thus one spake to another, with meaning look at his
neighbor: —

"Look at him! Surely the good deeds done by
Odysseus are countless,
Both as our foremost in prudent advice, and director
in battle;

Yet what he did just now is best of them all for the
Argives,
Squelching this word-slinging scold; for his insolent
spirit will never
Prompt him again with his scurrilous tongue to
vilify princes."

Thus the multitude talked; but the waster of cities,
Odysseus,
Stood up, scepter in hand; and beside him bright-
eyed Athena,
Taking the guise of a herald, commanded the
people to silence.
Then, with their good in his heart, Odysseus spake
to them, saying: —

"King Atreides, thy people are fain, it seemeth, to
make thee
Byword of failure and scorn in the speech of civilized
peoples,
Wholly ignoring the promise they made while
journeying hither,
Even that thou shouldst return with well-fenced
• Ilios taken.
Now, they cry to go home like so many children and
widows,
Yea, and excuse there is, too, from such long and
disheartening labors.

Why, if a man one month remaineth away from his
bedmate,
Kept by tempestuous seas and the blasts of boisterous
Winter,
Oh, how tired doth he grow of the many-benched
ship; and in our case
Nine long weary years have paced their tedious
circuits,
Yet we are waiting, waiting, our ships our comfortless
barracks.
Yet, 't is disgraceful to stay here so long — and
return empty-handed.
Bear up, friends, bear up for a time, till we learn
whether Kalchas
Prophesied truly or not; for this we clearly remember,
Yea, and ye witnessed it, all who remain unsnatched
by the death-fates.
Some two days from the time our fleet was gathered
at Aulis,
Freighted with woes for the Trojans and Priam,
and we, by a fountain,
Unto the gods on our altars were offering hecatombs
perfect
Under a beautiful plane-tree from which bright
water was flowing,
Lo, a sign was vouchsafed us: a monstrous portent,
a dragon

Red-backed, frightful, sent to the light by the lord
of Olympos,
Darted from under an altar, and made one spring
for the plane-tree.
Now, there were on it the young of a sparrow, mere
twittering children,
Up on the topmost branch, where amid its leaves
they were nested,
Eight, and the ninth was the mother that hatched
them; the merciless dragon
Ate them in spite of their piteous cries, while the
mother about them
Flew, lamenting her darlings; then, coiling and
darting, the serpent
Her, too, seized by the wing as she fluttered anigh
in her anguish.
After the snake had devoured the sparrow herself
and her children,
Him the god who had brought him to light made a
wonder forever, —
Lo, he was turned to stone by the son of mysterious
Kronos!
We, who were bystanders, stood there aghast at this
marvelous portent.
Then, since this terrible prodigy came amid sacrifice
offered,
Kalchas, straightway, inspired as a seer, expounded
it, saying: —

'Why are ye suddenly grown so silent, ye long-haired Achaians?

This is a wondrous sign from Zeus who governeth all things,

Late-coming, late of fulfilment, whose glory never shall perish.

Just as this monster the sparrow devoured, herself and her children,

Eight, but nine all told, including the mother that hatched them,

Even so we, that number of years, shall war over yonder,

But, when the tenth year cometh, shall capture the broad-streeted city.'

Just that Kalchas foretold, and the crisis is all that betides us;

Come, now, remain, ye mail-clad Achaians, and witness the outcome:

Stay right here till we capture the powerful city of Priam."

Loud as the roar of the sea when its billows buffet a headland

Jutting so far that, whatever the wind, the waves never leave it,

Such was the roar of applause that greeted the speech of their leader.

Straightway the meeting dissolved; to the barracks
scattered the soldiers,
Kindled their breakfast fires, and to one of the
mighty immortals
Every man of them sacrifice offered, earnestly
praying
He, that day, might scape from death mid the
tumults of Ares.

Unto almighty Kronion the king of men, Agamemnon,
Slaughtered an ox, a five-year-old fat one, and summoned the elders:
First old Nestor he called, and King Idomeneus;
later
Messenger sent for the Aiases twain, and stout
Diomedes;
Sixth to come was Odysseus, a match for Kronion in
counsel;
One man came uninvited, and he was the king,
Menelaus,
Seeing he knew, without being told, the cares of his
brother.
Then they stood round the ox, and the barley-meal-sprinkling followed:
Thus, then, amid them entreating in prayer, spake
King Agamemnon:—

"Zeus, most glorious, greatest, cloud-darkening
dweller in heaven,
Let not the sun of to-day go down, nor darkness
come nigh us,
Ere I have levelled to earth the smouldering roof-
tree of Priam,
Burned with consuming fire its ponderous portals,
and Hector's
Breastplate rent with the sword, and may many
companions about him
Lie with their chief on earth outstretched in the dust,
death-smitten."

Such was his prayer, but nowise did dread Zeus
grant its fulfilment,
Nay, he the sacrifice took, but imposed on him
labors unmeasured.

The battle which follows this scene at the ships continues to the end of the single combat between Hector and Aias in Book VII. Before it begins Agamemnon goes about to see what the leaders are doing, and when he comes to Diomedes unjustly charges him with lack of spirit. The incident is given here because it is alluded to in Book IX. This extract is from Book IV.

Bold Diomedes he found, the son of invincible
Tydeus,
Top of his chariot strong, with Sthenelos standing
beside him.

Seeing Diomed waiting, in winged words that return not

King Agamemnon spake in his haste, and upbraided him, saying:—

“What meaneth this, son of Tydeus, that hot-hearted tamer of horses!

Why this lagging? Why eyeing askance the bridges of battle?¹

Tydeus never lagged thus, but far in advance of his comrades

Fronted the foe, as beholders relate who saw him in battle.

I never saw him myself, but repeat the sayings of others.

¹ “Bridges of battle.” Homer here uses the ordinary Greek word for bridge, but in most cases evidently means by the word a dike or dam. The “dikes of war” seem to the translator to be a poetical periphrasis for “chariot-highways,” so called because they would look like dikes, particularly in crossing ravines and low places; and in marshy ground they might be dikes, and would serve the same purpose as a bridge. The expression here used occurs five times in the Iliad, all consistent with this view, and four of them in immediate connection with chariots as here. Agamemnon finds Diomedes standing in his chariot and sarcastically asks why he waits eyeing the chariot-ways instead of advancing. The question as to the meaning of the phrase has given rise to much speculation; but as it is evidently poetical and not to be rendered strictly, it has seemed best to adhere to the word bridge notwithstanding the fact that bridges in the modern sense may not have been known to Homer.

True, not in war, but in friendly guise, he came to
Mykénai,
Acting with Prince Polyneikes, when chiefs were
collecting the army
Meant to march against Thebes with its heaven-
built wall, and desiring
Us as allies; we espoused their cause, and promised
to aid them,
But, by signs of disfavor, dread Zeus withheld us
from joining.
After the twain had departed, and come to the
river Asópos
Bedded in rushes and grass, the Achaians made him
their envoy.
So, to Thebes he went, and found there many
Kadmeians
Breaking their bread in Etéokles' halls and, though
being a stranger,
Tydeus the veteran feared not, albeit alone amid
many;
Nay, but to games of strength he challenged them
all, and he conquered
Easily, such was the powerful help of Athena his
patron.
Then the Kadmeians, stern chariot-fighters, were
wroth and, to slay him,
On his departure an ambush set, and a strong one,
comprising

Fifty men in their prime; two leaders were over
the party,
Maion, Haimon's son, — in fight he was like the
immortals, —
Second, Autóphonos' son, Polyphontes, dreadful in
battle.
Tydeus, even on these, brought bitter defeat and
destruction,
Slew every man of them, all save one sent alone to
his homestead:
Maion he suffered to go, obeying the portents of
heaven.
Such was Aitolian Tydeus, but this, the son he hath
left us,
Lacketh his father's vigor in war, though better at
talking."

Thus he spake; but stout Diomedes answered him
nothing,
Having respect for reproof from his sovereign lord
and commander.
Sthenelos, then, the son of far-famed Kapaneus,
answered: —

"Speak no lies, son of Atreus, though knowing the
truth; we avouch us
Better far than our sires; we captured the seven-
gated city,

Thebes, and with fewer men, and a stronger wall to
 withstand us,
Strong in our faith in the signs of the gods and
 Zeus's assistance:
They, our fathers, failed, and died of their own mad
 folly;
Therefore, say not our sires were even our equals
 in honor."

Then, and his look grew stern, stout Diomed answered him, saying: —
"Silence, comrade; follow my leadership; I am not
 blaming
King Agamemnon for urging us mail-clad Achaians
 to battle;
Him will the glory attend if we are the victors, and
 capture
Ilios sacred, and his great grief if the Argives are
 vanquished.
Up, then, let us twain, also, awake our impetuous
 valor."

Ceasing, he down to earth from the chariot sprang,
 and his armor
Rang such a knell to the foe as had shaken the knees
 of a brave man.

Diomedes now proceeds to distinguish himself beyond all his comrades — so much so that Book V is known as "The Exploits of Diomedes." That book begins as follows: —

Then, in Tydeus' son, Diomedes, Pallas Athena
Spirit and daring enkindled, that he, mid all the
Achaïans,
Deathless renown might win. and shine their preëm-
inent leader.
Forth from helmet and shield she made an un-
wearying fire
Blaze like the star of the harvest when fresh from
its baths in the ocean:
Such was the splendor of flame that Diomed crowned,
as Athena
Sent him amain to the midst of the fray, where the
fight was the hottest.

This book consists almost wholly of battle scenes, wherein the Trojans are generally worsted. The literary motive of the book is two-fold: First to show that the Trojans and Hector are still overmatched notwithstanding the absence of Achilles, thus making the interference of Zeus when it comes more dramatic; and the single fight between Hector and Aias in Book VII serves a similar purpose. Secondly, it heightens our sympathy for Hector and Andromachè in the great scene in Book VI.

In other parts of this translation the fighting is an integral part of the main story; and believing enough is there retained to satisfy the taste of the modern reader, the

remainder of Book V is omitted. Among the exploits of Diomed set forth therein is the wounding of the gods Aphroditè and Ares, and thus driving them from the field, which explains the first sentence in Book VI which follows.

BOOK VI

Thus was the dreadful din of Trojans and warring
Achaïans
Left by the gods; yet wide o'er the field, now forward,
now backward,
Surged on the war, as the foes 'twixt Simois' streams
and the Xanthos
Battled and fought, and their bronze-shod' spears
drave hard at each other.

Aias, Telamon's son, that mighty bulwark of Argos,
First brake the Trojan lines, and brightened the
hopes of his comrades
Smiting a warrior from Thrace, the mightiest leader
among them,
Akmas even, courageous and huge, the son of
Eussóros;
Him the spear of bronze first hit on the crest of the
helmet,
Right where the horse-hair was thick, and then
brake in on the forehead
Piercing the bone; and his eyes were shrouded in
night everlasting.

Next Axýlos was slain by Diomed good at the war-cry,

Teuthranos' son, and he lived in the well-built town of Arisbè.

Man of abundant wealth he freely gave of his bounty,
Welcoming even the stranger who came, tho' he dwelt by a roadside;

Yet, in the hour of his peril, not one came forward to save him.

Thus he by Diomed fell; and with him his charioteer
Faithful Kelesios died; and they sank to Hades together.

Then was Adrestos, through chance, by clarion-voiced Menelaus

Taken alive; for his horses, bewildered and stricken with panic,

Caught in a tamarisk bough and, breaking the pole from the chariot,

Galloped amain to the city where others madly were flying,

Leaving their master to roll from the car down side of the car-wheel,

Prone on his face in the dust; and there stood dread Menelaus

Spear in hand; and, clasping his knees, Adrestos implored him:—

"Take me alive, son of Atreus, and thou shalt have
adequate ransom.
Rich is my sire, and many a treasure is stored in his
dwelling, —
Bronze, and gold, and iron ingeniously wrought in
the smithy, —
Whence will my father delight thee by paying a
ransom unstinted,
Granted he learneth I still am alive, and kept at the
shipping."

Thus he implored, and the heart of his foe was
melting with pity,
So that he quickly had sent him in charge of his
squire to the barracks,
Save that the king, Agamemnon, came running
across, and reproved him: —

"Oh, Menelaus! Oh, comrade! Why, why for men
this compunction?
Think! were the Trojans so scrupulous once in
respect to thy household?
Let not a man of them scape from our hands nor
utter destruction,
No, not the boy unborn; but may all without any
distinction,
Perish from Ilios, dying uncared for, and never be
heard of."

Thus spake King Agamemnon, and turned the mind
of his brother,
Giving this timely advice; and away from him,
then, Menelaus
Pushed the hero, Adrestos; and him Agamemnon
Atreides
Smote in the flank; and over he turned in his throes,
and the slayer
Stamped one foot on breast of the dead, and re-
covered his weapon.

Then with a shout that resounded afar called the
veteran Nestor:—
“Friends and Danaan heroes, ye resolute servants
of Ares,
Let not a man of you linger behind here, seeking
for plunder;
Kill the men, — that is first, — then plunder the
bodies at leisure.”

Thus he spake, and the spirit and might of all he
awakened.
Then had the Trojans to Ilios fled in fear and
confusion,
Saying that then, to Aineias and Hector, the greatest
of augurs,
Helenos, Priam's son, came up and spake to them,
saying: —

“O Aineias and Hector, since Trojans and Lykians
also
Look for guidance to you, because you are wisest
and boldest
When an emergency cometh requiring action and
counsel,
Stand ye your ground and, going among them, rally
the soldiers
Here in front of the gates, ere in utter demoraliza-
tion
Fleeing they fall in the arms of our women — a scorn
to the Argives.
Then, when you have encouraged and rallied all our
battalions,
We will keep up the fight, and abide the Danaan
onset,
Though is our weariness sore, for hard constraint is
upon us;
But, do thou, O Hector, repair to the city, and
straitly
Speak to thy mother and mine, that she gather the
matrons, and take them
Up to Athena's shrine in the upper parts of the
city;
When, with her key she hath opened the doors of the
goddess's temple,
Then the robe that seemeth to her most graceful
and largest

Stored in her palace hall, and which to herself is the
dearest,
This let her place on the knees of fair-tressed Athena,
and promise
Twelve sleek kine never touched with the goad in
her temple, if haply
Mercy she showeth our city of Troy, its wives and
its children,
Aye, and the son of Tydeus withholdeth from Ilios
sacred, —
Savage spearman he is, and mighty promoter of
panic.
Even Achilles we feared not so much, that captain
of heroes,
Born, men say, of a goddess; for terribly this
Diomedes
Rageth, and no man is able to match him in daring
and valor."

Thus he urged; and Hector, not leaving his brother
unheeded,
Straightway down to the ground from the chariot
sprang in his armor,
Then, two spears in his hands, went everywhere all
through the army,
Urging the soldiers to fight; and their ardor for war
and the war-din

Kindled anew; and the men wheeled round and
faced the Achaians.
Startled, the Argives retreated a space, and ceased
from the carnage,
Verily thinking a god had come down from the star-
spangled heavens,
Aid to bring to the Trojans, they turned with such
resolute spirit.
Then, wide over the field rang the voice of Hector,
who shouted:—

“Trojans, ye dauntless of heart, and famed allies,
our reliance,
Stand ye like men, my friends, and recall your im-
petuous valor,
Giving me time to go up to the city and talk with
the elders,
Even our leaders in counsel, and bid our wives and
our matrons
Pray to the gods for their powerful aid, and heca-
tombs promise.”

Suiting action to word, with the light dancing over
his helmet
Hector departed, the bulls-hide black on the rim of
his buckler
Smiting alternately ankles and neck as he strode to
the city.

Into the space the armies between sped, eager for
combat,

Glaukos, Hippolochos' son, and Tydeus' son,
Diomedes.

When they were drawing anigh as each at the other
was charging,

First to address his foe, spake Diomed, good at the
war-cry: —

“Who, bold sir, art thou, if to mortal race thou
belongest?

Never till now have I seen thee in man-ennobling
battle,

Yet thou confrontest my spear far, far in advance
of thy comrades,

Led by a daring thine own as if nothing mortal could
harm thee.

Desolate parents are they whose sons face me in
encounter.

Now, if thou art a god I fight not the dwellers of
heaven.

Short, ah, short indeed, was the shrift of mighty
Lykurgos,

Dryas's son, who dared in his rashness to strive
with immortals,

Him who in days gone by, the nurses of mad Dionysos
Chased down sacred Nyseion; and they their vine
leaves and thyrses

Cast to earth all together, for man-destroying
Lykurgos
Smote them all with an ox-goad; and Dionysos,
affrighted,
Plunged in the salt sea waves, and by Thetis was
caught in her bosom
Breathless and all of a tremble, so harsh were the
hero's upbraidings.
Soon on Lykurgos the gods, who themselves know
nothing of sorrow,
Punishment sent: Zeus rendered him blind; and,
even when blinded,
Not for long did he live, being hated by all the
immortals.
No, with the blessed gods not I am fain to do battle.
But, if mortal thy race, and the fruits of the earth
are its nurture,
Come straight on, and the sooner thy course will be
run to destruction."

Then the glorious son of Hippolochos answered him,
saying: —
"Great-hearted son of Tydeus, why ask the race I
am born of?
Generations of men are like to the leaves of the
forest:
Leaves of to-day to earth by the winds are strewn,
but to-morrow

New leaves start in the woodlands, they quicken,
and lo, it is springtime:

So generations of men, one cometh, another departeth.

Yet, if thou carest to know of my race, and many men know it,

Ephyrè, city embayed in Argos, pasture of horses,

Once held Sisypbos, shrewdest of men, who was father to Glaukos;

Glaukos, in his turn, was sire of a son, Bellerophon matchless:

Him the gods made to walk in beauty and affluent manhood,

Yet was his death designed in the heart of mightier Proitos, —

Mightier being a king invested by Zeus with the scepter, —

Who, for his beauty, drave him away from the land of the Argives.

Crazy with passion the queen of Proitos, lovely Anteia,

Wooded him to secret love, but all her arts and temptations

Moved Bellerophon not, for wisdom he knew and uprightness.

Scorned, she devised a lie, and told it to Proitos, saying: —

'May'st thou perish thyself, or slay Bellerophon,
Proitos:

He hath my virtue essayed, though I met his advances
austerely.'

Such was her tale; and the king, when he heard it,
transported with fury,

Yet to slay him forebore (for this to his soul was
abhorrent) —

So he to Lykia sent him, his death-warrant bearing
as tokens.

Marking a folded tablet with characters many and
direful,¹

This (to insure his death), he bade him take to Anteia's
Father; and off on his journey he went, and gods
were his convoy.

Now, when at length to my country he came, and
the Lykian Xanthos,

Lykia's wide ruling king received him with manifold
honors,

Gave him a nine days' feast, and nine were the oxen
he slaughtered;

But, when the tenth day's rose-fingered morn had
come in its glory,

Then inquiries he made, and asked that the tokens
be shown him

Which, (as was likely, he thought), would be brought
from his son-in-law, Proitos.

¹ The only suggestion of writing in Homer.

Now, when the tokens of death from Proitos were
seen by the monarch,

First, in pursuance thereof, he bade him slay the
Chaimaira,

Matchless to man, for her race was divine, a
prodigy monstrous

Having the head of a lion, the tail of a snake, and
in body

Goatlike, and terrors of ravening fire she breathed
from her nostrils;

Yet, even her he slew, for he trusted the gods and
their omens.

Next he was sent to war 'gainst the Solymi, famous
in story, —

This, of his battles with men, he said was his mighti-
est conflict.

Thirdly, the Amazons, manlike in battle, he fought,
and subdued them.

Finally, on his return, the king tried craft to en-
snare him:

That is, from out his dominions he, picking his
mightiest warriors,

Set them in ambush; but back to their homes these
warriors returned not,

All being slain by Bellerophon matchless, for no
man escaped him.

Now, when the king had perceived that his guest
was divinely descended,

There he in Lykia kept him, and gave him his
daughter in marriage,
And, with his daughter, moreover, gave half of his
honors of kinghood:
Then the Lykians settled upon him, apart from the
others,
Lands that were lovely with orchards, and corn-
fields rich in the harvest.
Children three, by his wife, were born to Bellerophon
matchless,
First Isander, Hippolochos next, then Laodameia.

Now, with Laodameia lay Zeus, who governeth all
things,
So she the mother became of our champion, god-
like Sarpedon.
Later Bellerophon gifted of heaven by the gods
was abandoned,
Wandered himself distraught adown the plain of
Aleios,
Gnawing his very soul, and the path of men he
avoided;
Also Isander, his eldest-born, by insatiate Ares
Perished, slain in the wars 'gainst the Solymi famous
in story;
Then, too, his daughter died, by gold-gleaming
Artemis smitten.

I am Hippolochos' son, from him I claim my descent
is;
Hither he sent me to Troy, and charged me over
and over
Always to be of the best, a man of mark mid my
fellows,
Heedful never to shame the race of my sires, who in
valor
Peerless in Ephyre stood, and Lykia's mighty
dominions.
This is my lineage, sir, and to be of such blood is
my glory."

Thus spake Glaukos; and glad was Diomed good at
the war-cry;
Fixing his spear in earth, he answered cordially,
saying: —

"Verily thou art a guest-friend of mine from the
days of our grandsires;
Oineus, my grandfather, once entertained Bellerophon
matchless
Twenty days in his halls, and they both gave beautiful
guest-gifts:
Oineus gave him a belt that was bright with the dye
of Phœnicia;
Princely Bellerophon gave in exchange a two-
handled beaker

Fashioned of gold, — I have it, and left it at home
when I came here.
Tydeus I do not recall, for he left me still in my
childhood,
Dying at Thebes when the host of Achaïans so
utterly perished.
Therefore I am to thee thy friend and host in Mid-
Argos,
Thou art the same to me should I go to the Lykian
country.
So let us shun each other in onset of spears; there
will still be
Plenty of Trojans and worthy allies for me to
encounter,
Plenty of Argives for thee, both in single fight and
in battle.
Let us change arms with each other, by interchange
showing beholders
How we are guest-friends from ancestors down, and
heed the relation."

Thus having spoken the twain from their chariots
sprang, and with ardor
Each grasped the hand of the other with pledges of
mutual friendship:
Yet of his wits was Glaukos bereft by Zeus, son of
Kronos,

Giving to Diomed armor of gold, worth oxen an
hundred,
Bronze arms only receiving, of barely nine oxen in
value.

Now, when Hector was come to the Skaian Gates
and the oak-tree,
Round about him came running the wives of the
Trojans and daughters,
Eager to ask for sons, for husbands, brothers, and
kinsfolk.
Hector's only reply was to bid them pray the
immortals, —
All in succession he bade, — for the woes that hung
o'er the city.

When he had pressed thro' the throng to Priam's
beautiful palace,
There his mother, gracious in giving, came forward
to meet him,
Having Laodikè with her, the best of her daughters
in beauty.
Clasping his hand in her own she fondly spake to
him, saying: —

“Why, my son, hast thou ceased from the desperate
strife, and come hither?
Surely the Argives are pressing thee hard, and an
impulse hath sent thee

Hither to pray, with thine hands uplift, from the heights of the city.

Wait for a moment, my son, and honey-sweet wine will I bring thee

Fit for libation to All-father Zeus and the other immortals

First, and thereafter refreshing to thee thyself, shouldst thou drink it.

Wine to a worn-out man his valor greatly increaseth, Toil-worn as thou art now in defending thy kindred and comrades."

Then great Hector replied, while the light flickered over his helmet: —

"Bring no wine sweet as honey to me, my revered mother,

Lest I be shorn of my strength, and forget my spirit and valor.

Nay, and I dare not, with hands unwashen, pour in libation

Sparkling wine to Zeus; nor is it in anywise fitting,

Soiled and blood-stained, to pray to Kronion who darkeneth heaven.

Nay, instead, go thou to the fane of Athena, the raider,

Offerings bearing, and gather together a train of our matrons;

Taking a robe which, in all the palace, is fairest and
largest,
Even the one that to thee is dearest of all thy
possessions,
Place it a gift on the knees of the statue of fair-
tressed Athena;
Promise her, also, to sacrifice later of kine, in her
temple,
Twelve untouched by the goad, if only mercy she
sheweth
Unto our city and wives, and the little ones of the
Trojans,
Aye, and dread Diomedes withholdeth from Ilios
sacred.
Thus go thou to the fane of Athena, the raider; and
meantime
I to the house of Paris will go, and call him to action,
If to such call he will hearken; — would earth might
yawn and engulf him!
Lighter my burdens would seem should I see him
descending to Hades."

Thus spake Hector; and back to the hall went she,
and her handmaids
Called, and all over the city she sent them to gather
the matrons.
She herself, meanwhile, to her darkened chamber
descended —

Place where stored were her broidered robes which
Sidonian women

Wrought, and from Sidon were brought overseas
by Paris and Helen.

One of them Hekabè chose to take as a gift to Athena,
One, the fairest in broidery work, it was also the
largest,

Yea, and it shone like a star; it was packed apart
from the others.

Then she went her way, and many a matron went
with her.

Now when the suppliant train had come to the
temple of Pallas

Built on the heights, the gates were thrown open by
fair-cheeked Theano

Daughter of Kisseus and wife of Antenor, tamer of
horses, —

Her who then was the priestess, for so had the
Trojans appointed.

Shrill rose their cries of distress as they lifted their
hands to Athena;

Fair-cheeked Theano, then, uplifting the robe in its
beauty,

Laid it in reverent wise across the knees of the
goddess;

Then, in prayer, she besought the daughter of
mighty Kronion: —

"Queenly Athena, thou goddess of goddesses, saver
of cities,
Break, we pray thee, Diomed's spear, and into our
city
Let him not enter, but prone in the dust lie prostrate
before that,
Front of the Skaian Gates, and twelve sleek kine in
thy temple
Never touched by the goad will we sacrifice straightway,
if only
Mercy thou shewest our city of Troy, its wives and
its children."
Thus she entreated in prayer, but the bitter cry was
unheeded.

While, in vain supplication, the women were praying
to Pallas,
Hector had come to the beautiful house of Prince
Alexander, —
Palace he builded himself with Troy's most skilful
mechanics, —
These for him had constructed a chamber, a hall,
and a courtyard,
Nigh to Priam and Hector, and all on the heights of
the city.
In went Hector Zeus-gifted; a spear in the hand of
the warrior

Held he eleven cubits long, and before him glittered
the spearpoint

Fashioned of bronze, and a ring of gold encircled
the handle.

Prince Alexander he found in his hall, his beautiful
armor

Brightening, breastplate and shield, and his curving
bow he was testing.

With him was Helen of Argos, her serving women
about her,

She overseeing some handiwork rare which the
maids were at work on.

Fixing his eyes on the prince thus Hector sharply
rebuked him:—

“Man of unreason, not wisely thou keepest this
bile in thy bosom;

Wasting away are the people defending our city·
forget not

Thou art the cause,—that the war-shouts and
dangers now flaming about us

All are fires thou hast kindled; another man skulk-
ing from battle

Thou wouldst upbraid, yet how vastly thine own
obligations are greater.

Up, then, or soon will thy city be fallen in dire
conflagration.”

Then Alexander, a god in his comeliness, answered him, saying: —

“Hector, seeing with reason thou chidest, and not beyond reason,

Therefore to thee will I speak; do thou be patient and hear me.

Not so much out of spite at the Trojans, nor just provocation,

Staid I here in my chamber, but fain would I yield to my sorrow.

Just now, also, my wife hath used her powers of persuasion,

Urging me forth to the war, and I, too, grant that is better,

Seeing that victory shifteth in war from one to another.

Hold, now, and wait for me here till I don my armor of battle, —

Else go ahead; I will follow straight on, and, I ween, overtake thee.”

Thus he said, nor a word spake crest-waving Hector in answer.

Then, ashamed and abased, spake Helen in words of submission: —

“Brother-in-law to me, the hated, the causer of mischief,

Would that some hurricane blast had, the day I was born of my mother,

Seized me and snatched me away to my doom to
desolate mountain,
Else to the boisterous deep to be sunk in the billows
of ocean,
Rather than this; but seeing these woes are de-
termined of heaven,
Then I would 't were my lot to be wife of a nobler
husband, —
One with a sense of shame, and alive to the taunts
of his fellows.
This man's mind is not steadfast, nor now, now will
be hereafter.
And, for his weakness, I ween, he will some day
reap the requital.
Come, my brother, and enter thou in, and sit in this
armchair,
Seeing the toil that bestrideth thy heart, thy labors
and sorrows,
All are from shameless me, and the follies of prince
Alexander —
We, who from Zeus have an evil doom, since even
hereafter
We shall be bywords in song to men of all generations."

Then great crest-waving Hector brake silence, and
answered her, saying: —
"Ask me not, Helen, to sit at my ease, though kind
is thy meaning,

Nay, but I cannot comply, for my soul is aleap with
an impulse
Drawing me back to the field where the Trojans are
needing me sorely.
Prythee, awaken thy husband, let him, too, wake
without urging,
So he may follow, nor fail to o'ertake me while still
in the city.
I, for a moment, shall go to my home for a look at
my household,
Even my darling wife, and my baby boy, for I know
not
Whether I shall ever see them again, once more a
survivor,
Or, under Argive hands, am doomed this day to my
downfall."

.

Hector finds neither wife nor child at home, and, on inquiry,
is told by an upper servant that Andromachè, hearing
the Trojans are hard pressed, had gone in her anxiety
to the great tower of Ilios where she could overlook the
battle. Hector gives up hope of seeing her and starts
for the field, but meets her accidentally at the Skaian
gates.

So the stewardess said, and away from the house
bounded Hector,
Back by the streets and the self-same ways he had
traversed in coming.

When he arrived at the gates, having crossed the
magnificent city,
Even the Skaian Gates, for exit thence to the battle,
There his bride whom many had wooed came running
to meet him,
Even Andromachè winsome, great-hearted Eëtion's
daughter —
(King of that Thebes nigh Plakos, Mt. Plakos dark
with its forests,
Called Hipoplakian Thebes, for its steeps frowned
down on the city —
Such was the sire, and his child was to Troy's high
champion wedded).
So, she her husband met, and beside her walked an
attendant
Bearing the boy in her bosom, a babe unwitting of
sorrow,
Hector's idolized son, and fair as a star in the
heavens,
Therefore by Hector Skamandrios named, Astyanax
others¹
Called him for pet-name, for Hector alone was
warder of Ilios.

¹ Astyanax means "master of the city" a name given the child out of compliment to the father, who as military commander in time of siege might well bear such a title. In Book XIX the name is translated "little prince." Skamandrios — the Skamander a beautiful river near Troy.

Bright was the father's smile as he gazed on his
baby in silence,
While, to his side, Andromachè stole and, bitterly
weeping,
Clasped his hand in her own, and said in loving
remonstrance: —

“Venturesome man, thou wilt fall by thine own
might slain, and thou heedest
Neither thine infant son, nor me forlorn, but will
shortly
Make me thy widow, for shortly the hosts of Achaia
will slay thee,
All dashing on thee together; and I, bereft and
forsaken,
Better might be in my grave! No other comfort
remaineth —
None will be left me more when thou, thou also art
perished —
Naught but despair! No more are my father and
comforting mother!
Slain, alas, was my father, struck down by the hand
of Achilles;
Waste is my city, the homes where my countrymen
lived and were happy,
High-gated Thebes; but Eëtion slain Achilles
despoiled not,
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Seeing he inwardly scrupled to do such a warrior
dishonor,
Nay, but the body he burned in his sumptuous
armor, and later
Made him a tomb; and the daughters of Zeus who
wieldeth the ægis,
Even the nymphs of the mountains, have elm-trees
planted about it.
Seven own brothers I had in my father's halls, but
the seven
All on the self-same day went down to the mansions
of darkness,
All, yea all, cut down by swift-footed, mighty
Achilles,
There mid the trail-footed kine and the white-
fleeced sheep they were tending.
Mother, who reigned as a queen in our realm by
forest-clad Plakos,
Hither Achilles had brought with all the rest of the
plunder,
Then had released her again in return for a measure-
less ransom, —
She, too, died, by Artemis slain in the halls of her
father.
Hector, oh, thou art my all, my father, my comfort-
ing mother,
Brother, and more than the lost ones, my strong
protector and husband.

~~~~~

Pity, oh pity, I pray thee, and here remain on the  
tower;  
Make not thy boy an orphan, thy wife so hapless a  
widow."

Much moved Hector replied, his helm all aflame in  
the sunlight:—  
"Doubt not that I, too, darling, consider all this;  
but I sorely  
Dread the scorn of the Trojans, our men and our  
women, if shunning  
Danger common to all I act the skulk and the  
coward;  
Nor doth my heart so prompt, for I have learned to  
be valiant  
Always, and ever to fight in the very front rank of  
the Trojans,  
Duly respecting my sire's great name and my own  
reputation.  
Deep in my heart and soul I too know this for a  
surety,  
E'en that the day is at hand when Ilios sacred shall  
perish,  
Yea, and Priam shall fall, and the war-trained  
armies of Priam;  
Yet as nothing to me are the woes foredoomed to  
the Trojans,

Naught is Hekabè's anguish, nor Priam's, my father  
and sovereign,  
No, nor the woes of my brethren, though they, the  
many, the valiant,  
Prone in the dust should fall, struck down by the  
arms of the foemen,  
Naught as compared with thine when one of the  
mail-clad Achaians  
Leadeth thee weeping away, thy day of freedom  
departed.  
Sometimes, in fancy, I see thee in Argos, an alien  
woman  
Making thee work at the loom; from Messeis<sup>1</sup> or  
fount Hyperia<sup>1</sup>  
Carrying water, unwilling, but mighty constraint  
put upon thee;  
Sometime, also, some person may say as he seeth  
thy tears,  
'This was the wife of Hector, the man of the horse-  
taming Trojans,  
Chief of their heroes in fight in the war once waged  
about Ilios.'  
Thus will some bystander say, and bring thee re-  
newal of anguish,  
Widowed of husband as mighty as I to save thee  
from bondage.

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced Mes-sé-is and Hy-pe-ri-a.

Oh, but I would be dead with the dark earth mounded  
to hide me,  
Sooner than hear thy cries, and thy dragging away  
as a captive."

Thus spake glorious Hector, and reached for his boy;  
but the infant,  
Screaming with fear, shrank back in the arms of the  
fair-girdled nurse-maid  
Sorely bewildered at sight of his sire in guise so  
unwonted,  
Fearing the bronze, and the horse-tail crest, as he  
furtively watched it  
Swaying above on the top of the helm, and portent-  
tously nodding.  
Then outright laughed the father, and even the  
woe-stricken mother.  
Hector at once on the ground laid the glittering  
helmet, and straightway  
Took the child in his arms; and, when he had kissed  
him, and tossed him,  
Lifted his voice in prayer to Zeus and the other  
immortals: —

"Zeus and ye other gods, vouchsafe that my son,  
this infant,  
Grow to be, even as I am, a man of mark mid the  
Trojans,



Equal in deeds of arms, and a mighty captain in Ilios.

May it be sometime said, 'he is greater far than his father,'

When he returneth from war, with the spoils of the enemies' captain

Slain by his unmatched hand, and glad be the heart of his mother."

Ceasing, he placed the child in his dear wife's arms, and she took him

Smiling amid her tears; and her husband saw with compassion,

Lovingly clasped her hand, and said in tender remonstrance: —

"Timorous woman, I pray thee be not too down-cast for my sake:

No man, before my time comes, is going to send me to Hades,

Nay, and none of our race hath the doom once fixed at his birth-hour

Ever escaped, I ween, the coward, no, nor the brave man.

So, go back to the house, and busy thy mind with employments

Suited to women, the loom, the distaff, and bidding thy handmaids

Keep to their work; the war will be cared for by  
men, and of all men  
Chiefly on me of the Ilios-born now resteth the duty."

This said, Hector with haste snatched up his glitter-  
ing helmet  
Nodding with plumes; and his wife went hurrying  
homeward, but often  
Turned she for one more look, then passed on  
bitterly weeping.

Paris delayed not his palace within, but, donning  
his armor,  
Came with a rush down the street, on his swift feet  
greatly reliant.  
Like to a stalled horse fed at the crib till wanton he  
waxeth,  
One who hath broken his halter and runneth the  
fields at a gallop,  
Proudly exultant, and wanted to bathe in the fair-  
flowing river;  
High he holdeth his head, and with mane flying  
wide o'er his shoulders,  
Cantereth off to the pasture of mares, self-conscious  
of beauty;  
Just so Priam's son Paris down Pergamos' hillside  
was rushing,

All ablaze in his armor as blazeth the sun, and with  
laughter  
Came he by swift feet borne; and thus he overtook  
Hector  
Just as he turned him away from the spot where  
Andromachè met him.  
Straightway Paris began, the godlike in beauty,  
exclaiming: —

“Good sooth, brother, I long have delayed thee  
though hasting to battle,  
Being remiss, and not coming on time,<sup>1</sup> as thou  
hadst commanded.”

Then great crest-waving Hector spake kindly, and  
answered him, saying: —  
“Incomprehensible man, no right-minded person  
could call thee  
Aught but a warrior bold and true, when it cometh  
to action;  
Will thou lackest, and firmness of purpose. Often  
my heart aches  
Inwardly, hearing the Trojans revile and denounce  
thee, who suffer  
Trials many for thy sake. But onward! We will  
hereafter

<sup>1</sup> By exaggeration “fishing for a compliment” (Leaf).

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Make amends for all this, if great Zeus ever  
vouchsafeth

Bowl of freedom to set in our halls to the blessed  
immortals

After our valor hath driven these Danaan hordes  
from our hearthstones."

## BOOK VII

Thus he spake; and forth from the gates rushed  
glorious Hector,  
Followed close by his brother, the prince Alexander;  
and in them  
Both was a soul on fire and longing for warfare and  
battle.  
Even as heaven-sent favoring breeze is welcome to  
sailors  
Voyaging over the sea and spent with the labor of  
rowing,  
Even so welcome was sight of the twain to the  
laboring Trojans.

First, at the hands of Paris, Menesthios, dweller at  
Arnè,  
Fell, Areithoös' son by ox-eyed Phylomedusa.  
Hector, with deadly spear next after him smote  
Eiöneus,  
Piercing the neck just below the helm, and inflicting  
a death-wound.  
Glaukos, Hippolochos' son, the chief of the Lykian  
warriors,

Hit with the spear, in turn, Iphinoös right in the  
shoulder,

Dexias' son, as he rode in his car mid the tumult of  
battle.

Down from the car he fell, and his limbs grew limp  
with the death-faint.

Bright-eyed Athena beholding the Danaans falling  
in battle,

Down from the heights of Olympos came rushing to  
Ilios sacred:

Down from Pergamos' height Apollo hurried to  
meet her,

Seeing his watch was sharp, and he victory wished  
for the Trojans:

So the immortal twain met together close by the  
oak-tree.

Kingly Apollo, the son of Zeus, first spake to her,  
saying: —

“Daughter of Zeus supreme, why hurrying so from  
Olympos?

Is it the tide of victorious fight to shift to the Ar-  
gives?

When 't is the Trojans that fall thou hast no emo-  
tion of pity!

Come now, hearken to me; it will be much better to  
hearken;

Come, let us stop the fight for to-day — the general conflict.

After, again they will fight till its foes bring Troy to its downfall,

Seeing thy heart and Hera's are bent on destroying the city."

Then for answer responded the goddess, bright-eyed Athena:—

"So let it be, Far-Smiter. The selfsame purpose I also

Had when I came from Olympos to watch the Achaians and Trojans.

Tell me, what is thy plan to stay the armies from fighting?"

Then, for rejoinder, responded her brother, kingly Apollo:—

"Let us persuade the resolute heart of chivalrous Hector

Challenge to make for a man-to-man fight with a Danaan warrior,

Then make the mail-clad Achaians send forth a chieftain to meet him."

Thus he said; and Athena, the keen-eyed goddess, assented.

Now this project of theirs, which the gods had agreed on together,

Helenos, Priam's son, overheard, and, divining its purport,  
Went to Hector and, halting, suggested accordingly,  
saying: —

“Hector, thou son of Priam, whose will like Zeus's  
is final,  
Hearken a moment to me, remembering I am thy  
brother:  
Make the rest of the Trojans to sit, and all the  
Achaians,  
Then send a challenge thyself that he who is best of  
Achaians  
Meet thee in single fight, and contend in man-to-  
man combat.  
'Tis not thy lot to fall, nor to-day shall fatality  
meet thee;  
This I know, for the voices I heard of the Ever-  
Existing.”

Thus he said; and, hearing his rede, brave Hector  
exulted.  
So, to the fore he went, and signalled the lines of  
the Trojans,  
Holding his spear by the middle; and all fell back  
and were seated.  
Down, too, the Danaans sat at a signal from King  
Agamemnon;



Also Pallas Athena and Phoibos Apollo, the archer,  
Taking the guise of birds — a couple of vultures —  
    alighting,  
Sat on the oak-tree high of Zeus who wieldeth the  
    ægis,  
Full of delight at the men; and the ranks of the  
    warriors were seated  
Thick, and bristling thick were the spears, the  
    shields, and the helmets.  
Even as roughening blast of the west-wind, suddenly  
    rising,  
Poureth its force on the sea, and its pathway darkens  
    beneath it,  
Such were the billowy lines of Achaïans and Trojans,  
    as seated  
There on the field; and Hector stood midway, and  
    spake to them, saying: —

“Hearken to me, ye soldiers of Troy, and ye mail-  
    clad Achaïans,  
Giving me chance to speak as biddeth the soul in my  
    bosom.  
Surely amid you are sitting the chiefest of all the  
    Achaïans;  
Whichsoever of these hath heart to meet me in  
    combat,  
Let him come forward, a champion sole, to fight  
    against Hector.

This, moreover, I say, and may Zeus for both be a witness:

Haply if he should prevail, and the keen-edged falchion slay me,

Let him bear off as a trophy my arms, but my body surrender

Back to my home, that the Trojans and wives of the Trojans may burn me,

All with rites as befitteth the dead, on the funeral pyre.

So, if I shall slay him, and Apollo victory grant me, I, in like spirit, his armor will bear to the city, and hang it

High on the fane of the far-darting King, but surrender the body

Back to his friends, that the long-haired Achaians with solemn observance

Bury it, heaping a mound on the shore where the Hellespont dasheth:

Then, for ages to come, will men of remote generations Say, while sailing it by, as the ship breasts its turbulent pathway,

'That is a tomb of the dead, of a man long ages before us,

Once a champion bold who was slain by glorious Hector.'

Thus will they sometime say, and my glory perisheth never."

Thus he spake: and aghast sat all in petrified silence.  
Shamed were the Argives to shun the defiance yet  
feared to accept it.

Finally, after a little, uprose Menelaus, and mid  
them

Spake from his scandalized heart with words of  
reproof and upbraiding:—

“Ah me, threateners! women of Argos, no longer  
Achaians!

Downright disgrace will it be, and misfortune piled  
on misfortune,

If, after all, no Danaan dare this encounter with  
Hector.

Zounds, but ye ought to return to the water and  
earth ye are made of,

Sitting here, every man of you skulks, nor know  
your dishonor!

Lo, I will arm and meet him myself; from realms  
far above us

Hang the threads of success, and gods immortal  
control them.”

Suiting action to word he donned his sumptuous  
armor.

Then over thee, Menelaus, and darkly, the death-  
shadow hovered,

Falling by Hector's hand, for in fight he was vastly  
the greater,  
Save that the Danaan kings sprang up and hurriedly  
seized thee;  
Aye, and Atreides himself, the wide-ruling king,  
Agamemnon,  
Took thy hand in his own and spake right urgently,  
saying: —

“Thou art mad, Menelaus, my royal brother; there  
needs not  
Any such folly as this; restrain thy misguided  
ambition,  
Neither rush into a fight to the death with a hero  
thy better,  
Hector, the son of Priam, whose onset the best of us  
shrink from.  
Even Achilles, albeit a much greater warrior than  
thou art,  
Dreaded to face this man in man-ennobling battle.  
Go right back and sit down with the troop of thy  
comrades, and doubt not  
We Achaians will furnish a champion bold, and a  
mighty.  
Albeit fearless is Hector and doeth unlimited  
talking,  
Yet right gladly his knees he will rest at home in  
the evening,

If he escapeth, that is, from the death-struggle he hath invited."

Thus spake King Agamemnon, and won the consent  
of his brother  
Giving this timely advice: so the latter complied  
and, retiring,  
Gladly his squires removed from his shoulders the  
rashly-ta'en armor.  
Then old Nestor arose, and spake mid the Danaans,  
saying: —

"Sdeath! what a mighty disgrace hath come to the  
land of Achaia!  
What deep groans should we hear from the chivalrous  
veteran, Peleus,  
That great speaker and counsellor-king of the  
Myrmidon peoples,  
He who exulted so much at the good old stock of  
our leaders!  
Why, if he heard these men were all of them cowering  
at Hector,  
Straight would he lift his hands and earnestly pray  
the immortals,  
Soul being reft from body, to sink to the mansions  
of Hades.  
Oh, I would, Father Zeus and Athena and Phoibos  
Apollo,

Would I were young once more as when by the Keladon river,  
Gathered together the Pylians fought the Arkadian spearmen,  
Hard by the walls of Pheia, along by the Iardenos river.  
Then, their champion stood Ereuthalion godlike in stature,  
Bearing the arms of a king, Areithoös bold, on his shoulders —  
Him who was Mace-bearer called by men and fair-girdled women,  
Seeing he used not to fight with bow or spear as a weapon,  
But, with an iron mace, brake down battalions in battle.  
Him Lykurgos had slain, but by stratagem, not by puissance,  
Catching him once in a narrow ravine where his mace could not save him,  
Seeing before he could swing it the spear of Lykurgos had slain him.  
Thus had Lykurgos the arms once given by Ares, the war-god,  
And, thereafter, bore them himself in the tumults of battle.  
Now when Lykurgos was old in his halls, he this wonderful armor

Gave to his squire to bear, Ereuthalion; armed in  
this armor,  
Challenge he made to our bravest; afraid and all of  
a tremble,  
Not one dared to accept; but *my* self-confident  
spirit, —  
I was the youngest of all, — drave *me* to seek the  
encounter;  
Yea, and I fought him, and victory gained by the  
aid of Athena.  
He whom I slew was the tallest of men and the  
mightiest also,  
Huge in size, both in length and breadth as he lay  
by the wayside.  
Oh that my youth would return, and my strength  
endure as aforetime —  
Then would crest-waving Hector have battle to  
face, and no waiting.  
Shame on you! here, you sit, the chieftains of all the  
Achaïans,  
Yet ye no willingness show for a hand-to-hand con-  
flict with Hector."

Thus did the old man reproach them, and nine men  
rose on the instant.  
First of all to arise was the king of men, Agamemnon;  
Next was the son of Tydeus, the mighty in fight,  
Diomedes;

Then came the Aiases twain, y-clad in impetuous  
valor;  
Then Idomeneus rose, and Idomeneus' faithful  
companion,  
Even Meriones, equal in fight to man-slaying  
Ares;  
Next Euripylos rose, the glorious son of Euaimon;  
Last was Thoas, son of Andraimon, and godlike  
Odysseus;  
These, if no others, were eager to fight with glorious  
Hector.  
Then, once more outspake the Gerenian veteran,  
Nestor: —

“Settle the question between you by lot, and abide  
by the issue.  
Verily he who is chosen will profit the mail-clad  
Achaians,  
Aye, and will win for himself satisfaction of heart, if  
he cometh  
Safe from direful war and the awful struggle to  
follow.”

Thus he said; and, marking their lots, every one of  
the chieftains  
Cast them into the helmet of King Agamemnon  
Atreides.



Then with hands uplift, the soldiers prayed the  
immortals:

This was the common prayer, with eyes upturned  
to the heavens: —

“All-father, either may Aias be chosen, or great  
Diomedes,  
Else, Agamemnon himself, the king of wealthy  
Mykenai.”

Thus they prayed, as the shaking went on by the  
veteran, Nestor,  
And, from the helmet, the lot leaped forth which all  
were desiring,  
Aias's. Taking it round to all the Danaan chieftains  
Hurried the herald, and all denied it save glorious  
Aias.

Seeing his mark on the lot he knew it was his and,  
exulting,  
Cast it to earth along by his feet, and spake to them,  
saying: —

“Truly, comrades, the lot is mine, and I heartily  
like it,  
Seeing I hope to win this fight with chivalrous  
Hector.  
Come, now, while I am donning my armor of war,  
notwithstanding,  
Pray ye in my behalf to Zeus, dread Sovran Kronion,

Only with bated breath, that the Trojans never  
may know it;

Nay, pray aloud if ye will, for man I care not and  
fear not.

No man by force, I trow, is going to drive me at  
pleasure,

No, nor by strategy either, for Salamis bore me and  
bred me."

Thus he said; and they prayed to Zeus, dread  
Sovran Kronion.

Over and over they said, with face uplifted to  
heaven:—

"Zeus, who rulest from Ida, All-father, most glorious,  
greatest,

Grant that Aias prevail, and make his victory  
brilliant.

But, if it be that Hector thou lovest, and carest  
for him, too,

Then be they equally matched, and equal glory  
attend them."

Thus they prayed; and Aias the while his glittering  
armor

Donned, and stepped to the front like monstrous  
Ares, who goeth

Forth to war amid men in the grim encounters of  
battle.

So stalked Aias then, the giant, bulwark of Argos,  
Grim face wearing a smile, and shaking his shadowy  
spear.

Argives gazed and exulted, the Trojans were all of  
a tremble,

Even in Hector himself the heart was secretly  
startled,

Yet there was no retreat since 't was he who issued  
the challenge.

On came Aias, his shield held forth like a wall in  
resistance,

Fashioned of bull's-hide and bronze, and Tuchiaos  
skilfully wrought it —

Famed for the making of shields of hide, and dwell-  
ing in Hylè, —

He made the glittering shield — and the bull's-hide  
used was the toughest,

Seven hides thick, and the eighth was an outside  
plating of bronze-work.

Holding before his breast this targe, Telamonian  
Aias

Came nigh Hector and halted, and thus he bade  
him defiance: —

“Hector, here is thy chance to test in hand-to-hand  
contest

What kind of men are the Danaan chiefs yet left,  
tho' Achilles

Nurseth his man-crushing might and his lion's  
heart at the shipping,  
Sulking from hate of Atreides; we still have such  
as can match thee,  
Yea, they are many; come on then at once, and  
begin the encounter."

Then, with the light playing over his helm, great  
Hector responded:—

"Zeus-born Aias, Telamon's son, stout leader of  
armies,  
Make not trial of me as a sickly child or a woman,  
Taught not in deeds of war: I well know battles  
and slaughter,  
Know how to wield to right and to left a buckler  
of bull's-hide,  
Know how to charge where the chariots dash, as  
becometh a warrior,  
Know how in hand-to-hand fight to dance the war-  
dance of Ares.  
Up! I have not a thought to spy in secret and  
smite thee,  
Being such as thou art, but openly, if I can reach  
thee."

Sooner than said he levelled, and cast his shadowy  
spear

Straight at the terrible targe, the seven-fold buckler  
of Aias,

Hitting the plating of bronze, the eighth and the outermost layer.

Through it, and through six layers of hide went the ponderous spear,

Tearing its way, but was stopped by the seventh; then Aias in *his* turn

Made a cast of his spear, and the full-orbed buckler of Hector

Hit, and the obdurate spear drave its way right through, and moreover

Pierced the curious corslet, and close to the flank rent the tunic.

Hector, by swerving aside, so closely avoided a death-wound.

Then, drawing back their spears each fell on the other like lions

Grim, or fierce wild boars, but this time the weapon of Hector

Brake not the plating of bronze, for the point bent back without piercing.

Aias sprang forward with drive at the shield, and through it the spear-point

Passed, and the force of the blow staggered Hector's violent onset,

Likewise grazing his neck, and the black blood spouted up sorely.

Not even then did crest-waving Hector retreat from the conflict,

No, but retiring a little, his stout hand seized on a  
boulder,

Black and jagged and huge, which was lying there  
on the greensward.

This he cast at the seven-fold shield, the terrible  
buckler,

Hitting it square in the center; and loudly the  
metal reëchoed.

Aias responded by seizing a stone greater far than  
the other,

Whirled it and cast, and strength irresistible put  
in the casting,

So that it shattered the shield, coming down with  
the force of a millstone.

'Gainst it no knees could stand, and Hector, pros-  
trated by it,

Tumbled back on his targe. In an instant Apollo  
upraised him,

And, hand-to-hand had they fought with their  
swords, save only the heralds

Envoys of Zeus and of men, intervened and ended  
the combat,

Even Talthybios, herald of Argos, and Trojan  
Idaios,

Both of them skilled; for, thrusting their scepters  
between them, Idaios

Knowing the words of the wise, as herald spake to  
them, saying: —

"Fight no longer, dear children, for Zeus who  
darkeneth heaven  
Loveth you both, and all men concede ye are both  
of you spearmen.  
Night is already at hand; it is well that night should  
be heeded."

Then, in reply to Idaios, outspake Telamonian  
Aias: —

"Hector must cry quits first, for he was the chal-  
lenging party.  
He, once taking the lead, I then will do as thou  
sayest."

Then, as Aias demanded, outspake great crest-  
waving Hector: —

"Aias, seeing the gods have given thee size and  
puissance,  
Aye, and sense, and in wielding the spear thou art  
best of Achaians,  
Now let us cease from the fight for to-day, and re-  
new it hereafter.  
Night is already at hand — it is well that night  
should be heeded,  
So that thou, by the ships, mayest gladden all the  
Achaians,  
Chiefly thy kin and thy comrades, and I in the city  
of Priam

Gladden the Trojans all, not only the men but the  
women,  
Who, I ween, will repair to the holy fanes with  
thanksgivings.  
Gifts let us give one another, moreover, to grace the  
occasion,  
Such that Achaian and Trojan may say, in recount-  
ing the story,  
‘Truly, the fight was terrific, but done, they parted  
in friendship.’”

Suiting action to word he gave a sword with its  
scabbard  
Studded with silver nails, and a well-made baldric  
to match it;  
Aias gave in return a girdle shining with purple.  
Then they parted, the one going back to the host  
of Achaians,  
Back to the Trojans the other, and great was the  
Trojan rejoicing,  
Seeing their champion coming alive and unharmed  
from the contest.  
Aias, elate with success, was escorted to King  
Agamemnon.

The remainder of the seventh book is believed to be a later  
addition by an unknown hand. Be that as it may, it is  
not essential to the story and is of little interest or  
merit. Antenor among the Trojans advises the restora-



tion of Helen and the possessions taken with her by Paris as the price of peace. Paris consents to the return of the property and to add treasures of his own, but refuses to give up Helen. This proposition is made to the Achaians, and is received in silence; but

Finally, after a little, spake Diomed, good at the war-cry: —

“Let not a man of us think of accepting the treasures from Paris,

No, nor with Helen to boot; for even the veriest dullard

Seeth, and plainly, the toils of destruction o’erhanging the Trojans.”

Thus he said, and all the Achaians applauded with spirit.

And to this refusal Agamemnon adds his sanction. It is agreed, however, that there be a truce long enough for both parties to burn and bury their dead; and the Achaians, in connection with the burial, erect a rude wall, with a trench in front of it. That the Achaians should do this in the tenth year of the war, and when they have suffered no reverse, seems absurd; but it probably was inserted here on account of the “Battle of the Wall” related in the twelfth book, though the existence of a wall might well have been assumed. It is mentioned because alluded to in certain interpolated passages which are retained in this translation. Poseidon complains to Zeus that this building is going on without sacrifice to the gods, and Zeus promises him that he may destroy the wall at the end of the war; and the book concludes as follows: —

While in this wise the twain were conversing, the  
one with the other,  
Down sank the sun to his setting, their work the  
Achaïans completed,  
Oxen throughout the camp were slaughtered, and  
supper was taken.  
Ships from Lemnos were anchored hard by, and  
were many in number,  
Laden with wine sent thither by Jason's son, by  
Eunéös,  
Him whom Hysip'ilè bare to Jason, leader of armies.  
He to the twain, Agamemnon and King Menelaus  
his brother,  
Shipped much wine as a gift, a thousand measures  
in number;  
So, from the twain<sup>1</sup> the long-haired Achaïans  
bought wine in abundance,  
Some of them paying in bronze, and some in glitter-  
ing iron,  
Others in hides; still other Achaïans made payment  
in cattle,  
Some, moreover, in slaves; and they set out a  
sumptuous banquet.

All night long in the Danaan camps the long-haired  
Achaïans

<sup>1</sup> For leaders of armies to make profit out of the commis-  
sariat seems not to be an altogether modern idea.

Feasted, and so did the Trojans and aids in the  
walls of the city.

All night long dread Zeus for both was designing  
disasters,

Direfully pealing his thunder, and pale grew faces  
with terror.

Men poured wine from their cups on earth, and  
none had presumption

Even to taste, till libation he made to mighty  
Kronion.

Then they went to their rest, and snatched the  
blessing of slumber.

## BOOK VIII

DAWN in her mantle of saffron was flooding the  
world with her glory  
When, on the uppermost peak of myriad-crested  
Olympos,  
Zeus, dread lord of the thunder, the gods convened  
in assembly.  
He, alone, made harangue; the rest attentively  
listened: —

“Gods and goddesses, each and all of you, list to  
my bidding, —  
Briefly, that none of you gods nor malcontent  
goddesses either,  
Venture to thwart my purpose; but, all together  
consenting,  
Aid me in speediest fashion to bring my will to  
fulfilment.  
If, in defiance of orders here made, I catch a recusant  
Going with comfort or aid to Trojans or Danaans  
either,  
Smit, and in evil plight, will he make his return to  
Olympos;  
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Else I will seize the transgressor and hurl him to  
Tartaros murky,  
Far, far under the earth where the dire gulf yawn-  
eth the deepest,  
Even as far 'neath Hades as earth is asunder from  
heaven.  
Then the offender shall know how of all the gods I  
am greatest."

After this warning was given, the great Sire har-  
nessed his horses,  
Bronze-footed, swift as the birds, with manes wide-  
flowing and golden,  
Girded himself in his armor of gold, and seizing the  
well-made  
Reins wrought also of gold, he straightway, mount-  
ing his chariot,  
Lashed the steeds to a run, and, not unwilling, the  
horses  
Flew in a mid-air course 'twixt earth and star-  
studded heaven.  
Soon to Ida he came, great mother of beasts and of  
fountains,  
Even to Gargaros, site of his shrine with its altar  
of incense.  
There his horses he halted, great Sire of men and  
immortals,

Setting them free of the car, and a dense cloud  
poured he about them.  
Then he seated himself on the summit, rejoicing in  
glory,  
Fixing his gaze on the city of Troy and the Danaan  
shipping.

One side had taken their breakfast, I mean the  
long-haired Achaians,  
Hurriedly, all through the camp, and there for the  
conflict were arming;  
Also, up in the city, the Trojans were arming against  
them,  
Fewer in number, but eager e'en thus, for conflict  
and battle,  
Driven by bitter compulsion to fight for wives and  
for children.  
All the gates were thrown open, and forth came  
rushing the soldiers,  
Footmen and chariot-fighters, and all was con-  
fusion and uproar.

When the two forces drew nigh and finally met  
one another,  
Then was clashing of shields and of spears, and  
fury of warriors

Armored in bronze; and shields pressed shields,  
and wild was the tumult.  
Mingled, then, were the groanings of men and  
their shoutings of triumph,  
Cries of the slaying and slain, and earth was drenched  
with their life-blood.

While, now, still it was morning, and day divine  
was increasing,  
So long the hurling of missiles and fall of the parties  
was equal.  
When, however, the sun had climbed to the middle  
of heaven,  
Then, nor till then, the Father, his golden balances  
poising,  
Placed in the opposite scales two fates that be-  
tokened disaster,  
One of the horse-taming Trojans, and one of the  
mail-clad Achaians,  
Holding the beam by the middle; and fate was  
against the Achaians —  
Their scale sinking to Hades, the other rising to  
heaven.  
Then from Ida he thundered vehemently, sending  
a fire-bolt  
Flaming and hot at the Danaan host; they, seeing  
the portent,

All were thrilled with amazement, and pale grew  
their faces with horror.  
Neither Idomeneus then dared stay, nor yet Agamemnon;  
Neither remained there the Aias twain, great  
servants of Ares;  
Nestor alone held out, the Gerenian, bulwark of  
Argos,  
Not from choice, but a horse was disabled which,  
hit by an arrow,  
Alexander had smitten, the husband of lovely-  
haired Helen,  
Right on the top of the head, where the front hair  
starteth its growing  
Into a horse-mane, — the spot for a wound most  
fatal to horses.  
Wild with anguish he reared, for his brain was  
pierced by the arrow,  
Swamping the other two horses while writhing and  
rolling in death-throes.  
While this side-horse's bridle and reins the old man  
was cutting,  
Springing ahead with his falchion, just then the  
fleet horses of Hector  
Came in pursuit, and dire was the charioteer they  
were bearing,  
HECTOR; and then and there the old man's life  
had been ended



Save that a lookout sharp kept Diomed, good at  
the war-cry.

He, with a warning shout, called out and exhorted  
Odysseus: —

“Zeus-born son of Laërtes, thou arch contriver,  
Odysseus,

Whither, turning thy back, dost thou flee like a  
skulk in the rabble?

Some one, while thou art flying, might plant his  
spear in thy shoulders!

Nay, hold fast, till we save the old man from this  
merciless savage.”

Thus he said; but not pausing to hear him, enduring  
Odysseus

Dashed them by and away to the sheltering ships  
of the Argives.

Then Tydeides himself, tho' alone, joined in with  
the foremost,

Boldly taking his stand in front of the horses of  
Nestor,

Lifted his voice, and in wingèd words emboldened  
him, saying: —

“Verily, aged sir, the young now surpass thee as  
fighters.

Strength once thine hath departed, and age is thy  
sorry companion,

Also thy squire is a weakling, and slow is the pace  
of thy horses.

Come, now, mount thee on *my* car, and see what  
the horses of Tros are, —

Horses I captured of late from that terror in battle,  
Aineias.

Let the two squires take *thy* span in charge, and  
with my pair will we twain

Drive full tilt on the Trojans, the tamers of horses,  
and Hector

Show that my spear, too, tho' resting, is frenzied  
for action."

Diomed said; and the veteran warrior nowise  
denied him:

So then the horses of Nestor were driven away by  
the trusty

Squires twain, Sthenelos bold, and Eurimedon,  
eager for action,

Also their masters, both, Diomedes' chariot mounted.  
Nestor, laying his hands on the shining reins of  
Tydeides,

Lashed the steeds to a run; and soon they closed  
upon Hector.

Straight at his oncoming foe Diomedes, his javelin  
hurling,

Hector missed, it is true, but the squire in charge  
of the horses,

Even Eniopaíos, the son of courageous Thebaíos,  
Guiding the car by the reins, he hit in the breast  
by the nipple.

Down and out of the car he fell, and his fleet-footed  
horses

Started aback; and his steadfast soul and life had  
vanished forever.

Then was the heart of Hector o'ershadowed with  
woe for his driver,

Yet, he in this strait allowed him, resentment and  
grief notwithstanding,

There unheeded to lie, while he drove in search of  
another.

Not for long were his horses in need of a master, for  
shortly

Iphitus' son he found, Archeptolemus bold, who,  
as bidden,

Mounted his general's car, and to him the reins  
were committed.

Then would destruction have been, and deeds  
beyond remedy happened,

Then had the Trojans been penned like sheep in  
the walls of the city,

Save that the father of men and of gods was swift  
to defend them.

Terrible, now, were his thunders and dazzling  
flashes of lightning

Cast down e'en to the earth in front of Diomed's  
horses;  
Terrible also the flame from the blazing sulphur;  
and, backing  
Under the chariot, cowered the horses, palsied with  
panic.  
Then fell the shining reins from the nerveless fingers  
of Nestor, —  
His heart, too, was afraid, — and thus he bespake  
Diomedes: —

“Back once more, son of Tydeus! to flight turn thy  
strong-footed horses!  
Dost thou not see that the favor of Zeus hath  
ceased to attend thee?  
Nay, for Kronides Zeus maketh Hector companion  
of glory  
Now and to-day; but to-morrow to us will he give  
if he pleaseth.  
Lo, it is not for man to withstand the will of the  
Highest,  
E'en tho' a man of might, for Zeus's power is trans-  
cendent.”

Him, then, answered in turn Diomedes, good at the  
war-cry: —  
“True as fate is, old man, is every word thou hast  
spoken,

Only my heart and soul are tortured and put to confusion

Knowing that Hector at some time will say, when haranguing the Trojans,

'I routed Tydeus's son, and he ran to the shipping for shelter.'

Thus will he sometime boast, and may earth yawn wide and engulf me."

Then came this ready rejoinder from knightly Gerenian Nestor:—

"Son of quick-witted Tydeus, what wild, wild words thou art talking!

Seeing that even if Hector shall call thee a coward and weakling,

Never will Trojan believe him, nor son of Dardanos either,

No, nor wives of the Trojans, whose husbands in pride of their manhood,

Stout-hearted warriors, too, in the dust lie low by thy prowess."

Thus having spoken, to flight he turned the strong-footed horses,

Up once again through the rabble; and after them Trojans and Hector,

Rending the air with their hoots, poured volleys of  
dolorous missiles.

Then at Diomed shouted afar great crest-waving  
Hector: —

“Great were the honors, Tydeides, the fleet-horsed  
Danaans paid thee,

Even a seat of honor, and meats, and a cup running  
over.

Now they will hold thee in scorn, for a woman thou  
art and no better.

Off with thee, cowardly coxcomb, thou never wilt  
find me flinching,

Never wilt mount our towers, for I shall be there to  
withstand thee,

No, nor capture our women, ere that will I deal thee  
thy death-blow.”

Thus he shouted exulting; and half a mind had  
Tydeides,

Turning his horses aback, to try conclusions with  
Hector.

Thrice in his daring heart grew the thought almost to  
a purpose,

Thrice from the mountains of Ida great Zeus, dread  
Arbiter, thundered,

Signaling thus to the Trojans the battle had turned  
in their favor.

Far and wide o'er the field then Hector called to the  
Trojans: —

“Trojans, Lycians, Dardans, ye fearless in desperate  
combat,

Prove yourselves men, my friends, nor forget your  
impetuous valor.

Plainly I see that Kronion to me hath graciously  
nodded

Victory great and renowned, and to Danaans utter  
destruction.

Fools foredoomed, who constructed these walls so  
feeble and worthless!

These will not hinder my prowess; and easily too  
will the horses

Leap o'er the ditch they have dug; but when I have  
come to the shipping,

Then have some forethought about you that raven-  
ing fire be provided,

So I may burn the ships as well as slaughter the  
foemen.”

Thus he exhorted the men; then cheerily called to  
the horses: —

“Now is the time to repay me the manifold care and  
attendance

Winsome Andrómachè giveth, great-hearted Eëtion's  
daughter,  
Setting before you corn and wine that refresheth the  
spirit  
Sooner than even to me, her husband proud and  
adoring.  
Up, then, and after them! Onward ye thorough-  
breds! Aid me to capture  
Nestor's wonderful shield whose glory mounteth to  
heaven,  
Famed to be wholly of gold, not only the shield but  
the handle:  
Also away from the shoulders of Diomed, tamer of  
horses,  
Rend the wondrous corslet, the cunning work of  
Hephaistos.  
If both these we might capture, I then should hope  
the Achaians  
Now and to-night would embark and be off in their  
swift-winged galleys."

Such were the words of his boasting; and, angered,  
imperial Hera  
Swayed on her throne, and beneath her in unison  
haughty Olympos  
Trembled, and thus she spake to the great god,  
mighty Poseidon:—



“Wide-ruling shaker of earth, I am filled with amazement that thou too  
Seest the Danaans fall without any emotion of pity;  
Yet they ever are bringing to Helika, aye, and to Aigai,  
Offerings many and gracious. Decree thou victory for them.  
Surely if we should agree, as many as favor the Argives,  
Back the Trojans to thrust, and wide-eyed Zeus to environ,  
He would be pining away up yonder on Ida, and lonesome.”

Greatly disturbed was Poseidon, the earth-shaking king, as he answered: —  
“Hera, audacious of speech! what wild, wild words thou art talking!  
I am not he to advise with Zeus Kronion to combat,  
Even tho’ all should combine, for Zeus’s power is transcendent.”

While they thus were conversing, the space from the ships to the rampart  
Filled with a press of horses and panicky soldiers of Argos,  
Pent there, and pent by one as awful as oncoming Ares,

Hector, the son of Priam, while Zeus showered glory  
upon him.

Now with blazing fire had the stately ships been  
enkindled

Save that imperial Hera inspired in the heart of  
Atreides

Purpose in person to visit the posts, and rouse the  
Achaians.

Quickly he wended his way by the huts of the army,  
and shipping,

And, in his stalwart hand an ample mantle of purple  
Holding, stood by the monster, — the great black  
ship of Odysseus, —

Placed in the midst, so a shout could be heard both  
ways by the endmost.

There with a high-pitched voice he called to the  
Danaans, saying: —

“Shame on you, soldiers of Argos! ye cowards! ye  
blustering braggarts!

What hath become of our boastings and claims that  
we were the bravest,

Boasts all idle and empty you men kept making in  
Lemnos,

Eating your fill of beef and drinking deep of the  
wine-cup,

Claiming that you, each one, 'gainst an hundred,  
aye, or two hundred,

Trojans would stand in fight; and now one Trojan  
outfights us,  
Hector, who quickly our ships with blazing fire  
will enkindle.  
Oh, father Zeus, didst thou ever a powerful monarch  
aforetime  
Fool with such folly as mine, and rob him of merited  
glory?  
Never for once did I pass unhonored thy beautiful  
altars  
When, in my many-benched ship, I hither roamed  
to my sorrow;  
Nay, I burned on them all rich fat, and the haunches  
of oxen —  
Offerings made to assure me thine aid in winning  
this stronghold.  
Yet, Zeus, this one prayer, my sole entreaty, accomplish:  
Suffer us just this once to escape from utter destruction,  
Neither permit the Achaians to yield to the foe without struggle."

Thus he spake; and his tears the Father viewed with  
compassion,  
Nodding assent that his people be saved, nor utterly  
perish.

Straightway sent he an eagle, the trustiest omen that  
flyeth,  
Holding a fawn in its talons, the young of a swift-  
bounding deer,  
And, when the eagle had come to Zeus's beautiful  
altar,  
Where to foreshadowing Zeus the Achaians made  
their oblations,  
Down dropped the fawn; and the Argives, per-  
ceiving the bird was an omen,  
Straight on the Trojans charged, and recalled their  
ardor of battle.

Then of the Danaans none, albeit their heroes were  
many,  
Boasted of getting the start of Tydeides in turning  
his horses,  
Driving them forth from the trench, or facing the  
foemen in battle;  
Nay, far ahead of the rest hesmote a helmeted Trojan,  
Phradmon's son, Ageláüs. In flight was he urging  
his horses,  
So that his back was exposed; and the spear of  
Diomed pierced him  
Midway his shoulders between, and right through  
his body he drave it;  
Down from the car he dropped, and his armor rattled  
about him.

Next behind came Atreides, and Menelaus his  
brother;

Following them the Aiascs twain, clothed over with  
valor;

Third Idomeneus came, and his comrade-in-arms was  
beside him,

Even Meriones, sturdy as man-slaying Ares in  
battle;

After, Euryalos followed, the glorious son of Euaimon;  
Teucer came as the ninth, and with bow bent, ready  
for action,

Halted under the buckler of great Telamonian  
Aias.

Stealthily Aias the targe kept drawing aside, and  
the archer,

Spying his chance, let fly and hit some man in the  
rabble;

Then, when the bolt was shot, and the victim down  
with a death-wound,

Back sped Teucer again, as a child to the arms of  
its mother,

Seeking Aias, who ever with shining shield would  
conceal him.

Who, then, first of the Trojans was smitten by  
Teucer the matchless?

Well, Orsilochos first, then Ormenos, then Ophe-  
lestes,

Daïtor and Chrómios also, and next Lycophontes  
the godlike,  
Then Poluáïmon's son, Amopáön, last Melanippos.  
Vastly cheered at the sight of the mighty bow and  
the bowman  
Wasting the Trojan ranks, the king of men, Aga-  
memnon,  
Drawing anigh him halted, and spake his word of  
approval:—

“Teucer, Telamon's son, dear friend, and pride of  
the army,  
On with thy shooting, and haply to Danaans prove  
their salvation.  
Be to thy father a joy, who brought thee up when an  
infant,  
And, though being a bastard, yet reared thee as one  
of his household;  
Make him, tho' distant far, tread high the pathways  
of glory.  
As for thyself will I promise as even shall be the  
fulfilment:  
If, by the favor of Zeus, the god of battles, and  
Pallas,  
I am to capture the city of Ilios, opulent strong-  
hold,  
Thou first after myself shalt receive a gift of dis-  
tinction,

Either a tripod, or span of horses, — the chariot  
with them, —

Aye, or a woman, else, thy bed to share and to comfort.”

Then to King Agamemnon called matchless Teucer  
in answer: —

“O Atreides, most noble, why urge who needest no  
urging?

Naught I abate, as it is, of the very best power that  
is in me,

No, but starting when first we began to drive them  
to Ilios,

Even to now, with my bow, have I faced the Trojans  
and slain them.

Eight are the keen-pointed shafts I have cast at the  
foemen to this time, —

All are fast in the bodies of youths who were doughty  
in battle:

Only this dog of a Hector I fain would hit and I  
cannot.”

Thus he said, and another, the ninth shaft, sent from  
the bowstring,

Aiming at Hector straight, and his heart was panting  
to smite him.

Hector again he missed, but his bolt Gorguthion  
matchless

Pierced in the breast, — a prince of the Trojans, and  
valiant in battle,  
Born of a mother in Aisumè bred, and wedded to  
Priam,  
Lovely Kastianeíra, whose beauty was like to a  
goddess.  
Then, as loppeth aside in a garden the head of a  
poppy  
When it is heavy with seed and the rains of Spring  
are upon it,  
So then aside drooped Gorguthion's head, weighed  
down by his helmet.

Teucer another arrow, — the tenth, — then shot  
from the bowstring,  
Aiming at Hector straight, and his heart was earnest  
to smite him.  
This time also he missed, for the shaft was turned by  
Apollo:  
Bold Archeptolemus, now, the daring driver of  
Hector  
Fronting the fray, he hit in the breast by the side of  
the nipple.  
Down from the car he fell, and aside the swift-footed  
horses  
Swerved, and his strength ebbed low, and his breath  
came fainter and failed him.



Keen tho' the pangs of woe that thronged the bosom  
of Hector,  
Yet, disregarding his grief, he left his comrade un-  
heeded,  
Promptly Kebríones bidding, his brother who  
chanced to be nigh him,  
Take the reins of the horses. Kebríones heard and  
obeyed him.  
Hector himself to earth from the glittering chariot  
bounded  
Shouting his war-cry fierce, and laying his hand on a  
boulder,  
Darted at Teucer straight, with passionate purpose  
to slay him.  
Teucer, in haste, from his quiver withdrawing a pes-  
tilent arrow  
Laid it upon the string, but him did crest-waving  
Hector,  
Just as he drew back the string in hope to be first in  
the hitting,  
Smite with the jagged stone where the collar-bone,  
under the shoulder,  
Neck and breast disuniteth, — the spot to disable  
an archer, —  
Breaking the sinew. Benumbed grew his arm to the  
elbow, and sinking  
Down to the knee, fell wide the bow from his para-  
lyzed fingers.

Not regardless was Aias, but, seeing his brother had  
fallen,  
Ran to his aid, and bestriding, protected him under  
his buckler.  
Promptly stooping to lift him two men, his trusty  
companions,  
Even Mekistes, son of Echeios, and godlike Alastor,  
Back to the roomy ships bore Teucer heavily groan-  
ing.

Then Olympian Zeus once more roused might in the  
Trojans  
Who, to the deep ditch straight, drove back the af-  
frighted Achaians,  
And, in the foremost line, strode Hector in prowess  
exulting.  
Just as a swift-paced dog when pursuing a boar or a  
lion  
Snaps at its flank, but keeps watch lest the beast  
turn back of a sudden,  
So on their steps hung Hector, a close and bitter  
companion,  
Slaying the hindermost ever; and back through the  
ditch and defences  
Fled the Achaians, and multitudes fell; but on reach-  
ing their galleys,  
Halting because they must, they appealed to their  
comrades, and lifting

Hands they prayed to the gods, as Hector his shining-  
maned horses

Wheeled, with the eyes of a Gorgon, or Ares hateful  
to mortals.

Hera, the white-armed goddess, from heaven behold-  
ing with pity,  
Straightway in wingèd words then said to Pallas  
Athena: —

“Come now, daughter of Zeus who wieldeth the  
aegis, shall we twain  
See the Danaans dying with no last effort to save  
them?  
Soon will their bitter doom have been all fulfilled,  
and they fallen,  
Under the onslaught of one, whose fury exceedeth  
endurance,  
Hector the son of Priam, and much hath he harmed  
them already.”

Her, then, answered in turn the goddess, bright-eyed  
Athena: —

“Yea, I agree that this fellow's career and life should  
be ended  
Here, at the hands of the Argives, cut off in the land  
of his fathers;  
Only this father of mine is crazed, and his mind is  
disordered,

Obdurate, ever goes wrong, and my darling wishes  
    he foileth,  
Never recalleth how, many a time, I, in Heracles'  
    trials,  
Saved his son, overwrought by the tasks imposed by  
    Euristheus.  
Oft he wept with his eyes upturned; and, on me rely-  
    ing,  
Zeus kept sending me down from the heavenly court  
    to his rescue.  
Oh, that to know all this I then had been given the  
    foresight,  
When to Hades, who keepeth the nethermost gate-  
    way, he sent him,  
Bidding him bring from Hell the dog of implacable  
    Hades, —  
Then had he never escaped the direful Stygian  
    river.  
Only for now am I hated of Zeus who, the wishes of  
    Thetis  
Doeth, who begged him to honor Achilles, waster of  
    cities.  
Surely my day draweth nigh to be called once more  
    'darling Bright-Eyes.'  
Up, then, harness the horses, while I to the palace  
    repairing  
Gird on my armor of battle. I fain would see if this  
    Hector,

Priam's high-plumed son, as we mount the bridges  
of battle  
Keepeth a smiling front, or many a man of the  
Trojans  
Falls by the ships of the Argives, and feeds the dogs  
and the vultures."

Thus spake Athena, and Hera complied, and har-  
nessed the horses,  
Hera, imperial consort, and daughter of Kronos the  
mighty.  
Pallas Athena, daughter of Zeus who wieldeth the  
aegis,  
Came to her father's threshold, and poured from off  
her her vesture  
Woven in many a hue, that her own hands made and  
embroidered;  
Then the tunic put on of Zeus who darkeneth heaven,  
Arming herself complete in his armor of dolorous  
battle;  
Next on the chariot fiery her feet ascending, her  
spear  
Heavy and stout she brandished, wherewith she, in  
might of her father,  
Vanquisheth armies of men encountered in pride of  
her anger.  
Hera, promptly, the lash applied to the horses, and  
open

Flew of their own accord the gates of Heaven, which  
the Hours  
Hold, and as warders of Heaven the clouds throw  
open, or close them;  
Through these gates drove Hera the golden-frontleted  
horses.

Zeus, the Father, from Ida beheld them, and terribly  
angered  
Called on golden-winged Iris to carry a message of  
warning: —

“Haste thee and go, swift Iris, and turn them back,  
nor permit them  
Further to come; no jest, but grim were our meeting  
in battle.  
This will I tell thee plainly, and verily will I perform  
it: —  
First I will lame the horses so nimbly their chariot  
drawing,  
Then themselves from the car will cast, and the  
chariot shatter;  
Nay, and in ten years time of season succeeding  
to season  
Will not the wounds be healed where the thunderbolt  
catches and tears them.  
Bright-Eyes the lesson shall learn what it means to  
fight with her father.”

Thus he said; and away with her message storm-footed Iris

Sped from the mountains of Ida in haste to lofty Olympus.

Just by the entrance-gates of many-folded Olympus  
There she met and detained them, and Zeus's warning repeated: —

“Whither are you twain going? What madness  
rageth within you?

Kronides strictly forbiddeth the giving of aid to  
the Argives.

Thus doth Kronides threaten, and verily will he  
perform it, —

Even to lame the horses your chariot drawing so  
nimble,

Then yourselves from the car to cast, and the chariot  
shatter;

Yea, and in ten years time of season succeeding to  
season

Will not the wounds be healed where the thunderbolt  
catches and tears you.”

Now when her message was spoken away went  
swift-footed Iris,

Leaving them sorely dismayed, and thus to Athena  
spake Hera: —

"Verily, daughter of Zeus, for one I deem it no longer  
Prudent, for mortal's sake, with Zeus to hazard a  
contest.

We must let one man die, and another live, as it  
chanceth;

Zeus must the thought of his heart determine for  
Trojan and Argive."

Suiting action to word she back turned the strong-  
footed horses;

For them their servants, the Hours, the bright-  
maned horses unharnessed,

Afterwards tying them fast to feed at ambrosia  
mangers,

Then, the war-car they leaned 'gainst the vestibule's  
glittering side-wall;

Hera, meanwhile, and Athena, the court immortal  
reseeking,

Sat by themselves on couches of gold, crest-fallen  
and angry.

Zeus, the Father, from Ida his well-wheeled war-car  
and horses

Drove on the road to Olympos, and came where the  
gods were assembled.

Mighty Poseidon, who shaketh the earth, his horses  
unharnessed,

Then, first spreading the cover, the chariot placed  
in the car-rack.



Zeus, who seeth afar, to his golden throne proceeding,  
Seated himself, and under his feet quaked haughty  
Olympos.

They apart, and aloof from Zeus, — Athena and  
Hera, —

Sat and said never a word, nor made of him any  
inquiry;

He, however, divining their feelings, bantered them,  
saying: —

“Prythee, why so despondent, you twain, Athena  
and Hera?

Not worn out are you, surely, in man-ennobling  
battle,

Venting your pitiless hate in slaying its object,  
the Trojans.

So are my hands unmatched, and my might exceed-  
ing, that never

Me had the gods turned back, not all the gods of  
Olympos;

Otherwise you, for beforehand your limbs were all  
of a tremble

E'er you had seen the battle and battle's dolorous  
havoc.

Never, I say, on your chariot borne, had you come  
to Olympos,

Here where immortals abide, if once by my thunder-  
bolt smitten.”

Thus he spake; and they muttered, I mean Athena  
and Hera,  
Sitting beside him the while, and woes they devised  
for the Trojans.  
Utterly speechless with rage at father Zeus was  
Athena,  
Nor did she utter a word though furious anger  
possessed her.  
Hera, however, her spleen could not hold in, and  
she answered: —

“Mightiest son of Kronos, this boastful talk is  
quite needless;  
We do not need to be told that in brute strength  
thou art not lacking.  
Nevertheless with compassion we look on the  
Danaan’ spearmen  
Who, with their evil doom filled full, would utterly  
perish.”

Then cloud-gathering Zeus spake up and answered  
her, saying: —  
“More than to-day shalt thou see on the morrow  
resistless Kronion, —  
Granting thou carest to look, thou ox-eyed imperial  
Hera, —  
Wasting the mighty array of thy friends, the spear-  
men of Argos.

Never, I say, shall desist from the onslaught sinewy  
Hector  
Ere he shall rouse from the ship where he sulks,  
Achilles, to meet him.  
That, I say, is decreed; and thee and thy anger I  
heed not,  
Though in a rage thou shouldst go to the uttermost  
regions, the limits  
Even of earth and of sea, where Iapetus sitteth and  
Kronos,  
Neither enjoy they the rays of the sun in his jour-  
neys above us,  
No, nor the breeze, but about them is Tartaros  
yawning unfathomed;  
Yea, if thou, wandering off, go thither even, I care not,  
Neither care I for thy spite, so shameless thou art  
and so shrewish."

Never a word in reply spake white-armed Hera.  
And duly  
Down the luminous orb of the sun sank into the  
ocean,  
Dragging behind it the blackness of night o'er the  
world of the living.  
Unto the Trojans came sunset unwelcome; but  
unto the Argives  
Welcome as thrice-bidden guest came nightfall,  
gloomy and gruesome.

Glorious Hector, betimes, convened in assembly  
the Trojans,  
Leading them far from the ships to the banks of an  
eddy river  
Where, in a clearing, a spot was found by the dead  
unencumbered.  
Down from the chariot vaulting to earth, they  
listened to Hector,  
Gifted of Heaven, who harangued them; a spear in  
the hand of the warrior  
Held he eleven cubits long; and before him glit-  
tered the spear-point  
Fashioned of bronze, and a ring of gold encircled  
the handle.  
Leaning on this he harangued, and these were his  
words to the Trojans:—

“Hearken ye Trojans and Dardans, ye allies stal-  
wart and trusty;  
High was my hope this day to destroy both ships  
and Achaians  
All, and in triumph return to the cooling breeze of  
the city;  
Ah, but too soon came the darkness, — their sole  
but transient salvation, —  
Else were the beach now lined with the dead and  
the wrecks of the Argives.  
Still, as night is upon us, assuredly we must obey her,

Supper provide for ourselves and, our fair-maned  
horses unhitching,  
Set them free of the car, and cast down fodder  
before them;  
Then from the city drive hither abundance of  
cattle and fatlings  
Quickly as may be, and wine provide for refresh-  
ment of spirit,  
Also bread from the houses; and firewood gather  
in plenty,  
So that the whole night long, to the early light of  
the morning,  
Many a fire we may burn, and the splendor mount  
to the heavens,  
Lest that, even by night, perchance the long-haired  
Achaïans  
Make a rush to escape o'er the sea's broad back in  
their shipping.  
See that without a struggle, and all unscathed,  
they embark not,  
No, but that many a man get a blow to nurse at his  
homestead,  
Stricken by arrow of thine, or keen-pointed spear,  
while in terror  
Leaping aboard his ship, that many an other  
hereafter  
Dread to make dolorous war on the Trojans, tamers  
of horses.

Also let heralds, befriended of Zeus, up and down  
in the city

Make proclamation that boys who are ripening,  
also the greybeards,

Pass the night on the towers which a god built  
circling the city;

Also the women folk, — let every one in the houses  
Kindle a roaring fire; and see that the watch be  
untiring

Lest, while the host is away, an ambush enter the  
city.

Thus let it be, ye Trojans, ye great of heart, as I  
tell you.

Good is my counsel for now, but only for now; in  
the morning

Otherwise, otherwise far, my words to my chival-  
rous Trojans.

Faith have I in my prayer to Zeus and the other  
immortals

Hence these dogs, set on us by fate, we shall drive  
from our hearthstones.

Only to-night keep guard; with the first faint  
streaks of the morning

Arm, and the hostile ships assail in furious onset.

Then shall trial be had 'twixt me and stout Di-  
omedes,

Whether he drive me back from the ships to the  
city or, fallen

Under my spear, shall yield me his bloodstained  
arms as a trophy.  
Proof must he make of his valor that day, if haply  
his daring  
Prompts him my spear to abide; but, methinks, in  
the forefront at sunrise  
He will be lying in death with a host of his com-  
rades about him.  
O that I were as surely immortal and ageless, forever  
Honored as Pallas Athena and Phoibos Apollo are  
honored,  
Sure as I am that this day is to Danaans big with  
disaster."

Thus did Hector harangue, and the Trojans roared  
their approval,  
Promptly their horses all steaming with sweat set  
free of the harness,  
Then, to the chariot-side securely hitched them  
with halters;  
Next, they drove from the city large herds of cattle  
and fatlings,  
All with despatch, and wine that refresheth the  
heart they provided,  
Also food from the houses, and firewood gathered  
in plenty.  
So to the gods immortal they sacrificed hecatombs  
perfect,

Filling the plain with a savor that rose into heaven,  
— a savor

Sweet to the nostrils: but of it the blessed immortals partook not,

No, nor wished to partake; for hated was Ilios sacred,  
Yea, and Priam was doomed, and the war-trained  
armies of Priam.

Yet, exultant of heart, with front toward the bridges  
of battle,

Sat they the whole night long, and the fires that  
they kindled were many.

E'en as the stars in her train with the moon as she  
walketh in splendor

Blaze forth bright in the heavens on nights when  
the welkin is breathless, —

Nights when the mountain tops, their jutting  
cliffs, and the valleys

All are disclosed to the eye, and above them the  
fathomless ether

Opens to star after star, and glad is the heart of the  
shepherd: —

Such and so many the fires 'twixt the ships and the  
streams of the Xanthos

Kept ablaze by the Trojans in front of the darken-  
ing city.

Over the plain were burning a thousand fires, and  
beside them



Each sat fifty men in the firelight glare; and the  
horses,  
Champing their fodder and barley white, and in-  
stant for action,  
Stood by the chariot-side and awaited the glory of  
morning.

“With front toward the bridges of battle.” The preposition *ἐν* in this phrase occurs only here, and indicates the eagerness of the Trojans for the advance at day-break — an eagerness in which the horses are represented as sharing. The word *ἑσταότες* implies alertness or at least readiness to move, the opposite of *κελμενος* which implies supineness when it does not signify actual inability to move.

Homer has been criticised as to this celebrated passage on the ground that stars would be dimmed about an unusually bright moon; but if *ἀμφὶ σελήνην* is a military figure as is found in lines 81–84 in Book IX, meaning that the moon with its retinue of stars all looked bright, the reason for this objection disappears. The classical explanation that Homer meant that the moon is a shining object (in its nature), and not that it is unusually luminous on nights like that described, does not meet the difficulty and is not in accordance with fact.

## BOOK IX

THREATENING, thus, were the outposts of Troy; but  
palsying panic

Reigned in the Danaan camp, and their bravest all  
were disheartened.

Even as cross-winds buffet the sea, the home of the  
fishes,

Boreas mighty and Zephyr, from Thrace both  
blowing athwart it,

Suddenly rising; and, massed together, the dark-  
ening billows

Swell, and along by the shore cast out much burden  
of sea-weed;

Such was the tumult of soul in the breasts of the  
baffled Achaians.

Smit with despair Agamemnon went round to the  
heralds, and bade them

Call an assembly, not crying a loud proclamation,  
but summon

Singly the Danaan host, and he toiled himself with  
the foremost.

So, in assembly they sat, dejected; and up Aga-  
memnon

Stood, and adown his face streamed tears, as a  
fount of black water  
Poureth its violet flood down cliff that goat never  
clambered;<sup>1</sup>  
So, and heavily groaning, he spake to the Danaans,  
saying: —

“Oh, my friends, ye Danaan heroes, ye princes of  
Argos,  
Me hath Zeus, son of Kronos, ensnared in a crush-  
ing delusion;  
Arch-deceiver! aforetime he nodded a solemn as-  
surance  
I should return to my home, with high-walled Ilios  
captured;  
Yet he upon me hath practiced a base deception,  
and bids me

<sup>1</sup> “Cliff that goat never clambered.” The old etymology of this Homeric rock-epithet, “goat-left,” has been ridiculed, but consideration of the simile shows that it is singularly apt. Water running down the face of a cliff would only appear black when it adhered all the way down so that the dark vegetable growth behind it showed through, and there be no light behind it. Such a rock might be steep, but not too steep, and must be without seams and rifts, particularly those running diagonally, which would cause cascades and foam. Such a rock could not be climbed even by the mountain goat, but with lateral rifts the goat might climb it, however steep. Homer means that tears streamed down Agamemnon's face like water down a steep smooth cliff.

Argos seek in disgrace, for sore is the loss of my people.

Such, it seemeth, dread Zeus hath decreed, and his might is resistless —

Zeus, who of many a city hath overturned the high-places,

Yea, and will still overturn, for his is dominion supremest.

Up, then, the counsel that *I* give let every man of us follow: —

Back let us flee with our ships to the yearned-for land we were born in,

Seeing no longer is hope of our taking the wide-streeted city.”

Thus he spake; and deep was the silence that fell on his hearers —

Yea, and for long were they silent, the worn and disheartened Achaians:

Finally, after a little spake Diomed, good at the war-cry: —

“I, to begin with, Atreides, shall charge thee as lacking in judgment,

Which, in assembly, O king, is my right; so be ye not angered.

Thou wert the first, and the Danaans heard thee,  
to sneer at my courage,  
Saying, in substance, that I was no soldier, a weak-  
ling; and these things  
All are known to the Argives, alike to the youths  
and the elders.  
Thy gifts were sorely mismatched by the son of  
mysterious Kronos:  
Rank he gave thee, and kingly power, surpassing  
all others;  
Firmness he granted thee not, which is sovereign  
power at its highest.  
Dost thou really imagine, vain man, the Danaan  
soldiers  
Cowards and weaklings will prove, according as  
thou hast just spoken?  
If in thy heart wellet up such a fantasy wild for  
returning,  
Go! the way is thine own, and nigh to the sea are  
thy galleys  
Ready to launch; and many thou hast which  
sailed from Mykenai.  
Go, I say, but the rest will remain, we long-haired  
Achaïans,  
E'en till we lay Troy low; but ay, let even the  
others  
Flee with their ships to their own dear land, yet  
two men for all that,

Sthenelos even and I, will keep up the contest,  
until we  
Search out the doom of Troy; for high Heaven  
sanctioned our coming."

Thus he spake; and in wild acclamation the audience thundered,  
Deeply moved by the spirit of Diomed, tamer of horses.  
Then the veteran Nestor arose, and spake to them,  
saying: —

"Passing mighty in battle art thou, Diomedes, and likewise  
Even in counsel art greatest amid thy youthful companions:  
What thou sayest will no man of all the Achaians disparage,  
Neither gainsay it; and yet thou hast reached not the goal of discussion.  
Verily thou art young, and my son mightest be, even.  
Lo, I am older than thou, and, an old's man's privilege claiming,  
I will speak plainly, and probe our ills to the bottom: yet no man,  
None will dishonor my words, not even King Agamemnon.

Lost is that man to tribe, to social usage, and  
homeless,  
Whoso, his people among, promoteth palsyng  
discord.  
First, what is fitting for night let us do, set guards  
at the ramparts,  
Also our suppers prepare; for the young men this;  
then, Atreides,  
Take thou the lead, for of Danaan kings thy rank  
is the highest.  
Give thou a feast to the elders. The act would be  
everyway fitting:  
Full of wine are thy quarters, which ever the Danaan  
galleys  
Bring thee daily from Thrace o'er the great deep's  
billowy highway, —  
Every facility hast thou for guests, and many thy  
pages.  
Then when together our wisest are met, to him  
thou shouldst hearken  
Whoso counseleth best; for sorely need the Ach-  
aians  
Heedful guidance and wise, for nigh to our ships  
are the foemen  
Burning many a camp-fire; and who at the sight  
could be joyous?  
This is the night that either will save our host or  
destroy it."

Thus he spake; and with reverence due they heark-  
ened; and straightway  
Forth the sentinels sallied in troops, all clad in their  
armor.  
Seven were the captains over the guards, and each  
had an hundred  
Young men under him marshalled, with long spears,  
ready for action.  
Taking their several stations betwixt the ditch and  
the rampart,  
There they kindled their fires, and each made ready  
his supper.

Then Atreides invited the throng of the Danaan  
elders  
Into his quarters and, spreading before them a boun-  
tiful banquet,  
All stretched forth their hands to the good cheer  
lying before them.  
After their hunger and thirst were appeased, and  
the banquet was over,  
First was the sage old man to begin the formal  
discussion,  
Nestor, whose counsel aforetime had proved to be  
ever the wisest;  
He, for the common good, then spake to the com-  
pany, saying: —





"O Atreides, most noble, thou king of men, Agamemnon,  
Thou art the man I address, and wilt be my end and beginning,  
Seeing the peoples thou rulest are many, and scepter thou wieldest,  
Guardest their customs, and counsellest for them as Zeus's vicegerent.  
Therefore needs must thou speak and listen more than another,  
Yea, and conform to another's advice who, moved by the spirit,  
Speaks for the common good; but all, in the end, thou decidest.  
What course seemeth to me to be best is this, and a better  
No man will offer than mine which I held from the start to the finish,  
E'en from the time, O king, when thou the damsel Briseis  
Went and with high hand wrested away in despite of Achilles,  
Nowise with any concurrence of ours; nay, urgently very  
I at least sought to dissuade thee; but thou, to thy passionate spirit  
Yielding, a warrior, our best, whom the very gods hold in honor,

|||

Dishonored, taking his prize, and thou keepest her  
still; and I counsel  
Once and again reconciliation, and fitting amends for  
the insult,  
Both by the giving of adequate gifts, and apology  
ample."

Then, for answer, responded the king of men, Agamemnon:—

"Nowise false, old man, is the tale thou hast told of  
my madness.

I was a fool! I deny it not! for equal to many  
Hosts is the man whom Zeus so heartily loveth, as  
this man

Even now he hath honored by crushing the armies of  
Argos.

But, since a fool I was, and yielded to pestilent  
passion,

Ample amends would I make and penalty pay with-  
out stinting.

Here in the presence of all the notable gifts will I  
number:—

Seven tripods by fire untouched, and of gold ten  
talents,

Shining cauldrons twenty, and twelve sound, power-  
ful horses—

Horses that win in the race, and prizes have taken  
for swiftness.

Far from poor would any man be who had such a  
fortune,  
Neither of much-prized gold be unpossessed, to whose  
coffers  
Came all the prizes won me by means of those  
strong-footed horses.  
Seven women, moreover, well-skilled in handiwork  
matchless,  
Lesbian dames who in beauty are fair mid the fairest  
of women,  
Those I picked for myself when we captured popu-  
lous Lesbos,  
These will I give, and among them the woman  
whereof I deprived him,  
Even the daughter of Briseus; and solemn oath in  
addition  
Take, that I never have lain with the girl as man  
with a woman.  
All these things I have named shall be his forthwith;  
and whenever  
Priam's great city the gods shall grant our forces to  
plunder,  
Then a shipload of gold and of bronze he may lade  
on his galleys,  
Entering in for the booty when we Achaians divide  
it;  
Also, of Trojan women, his pick he may take of the  
twenty

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Fairest amid them all next after Helen of Argos.  
When to Achaian Argos we come, that udder of  
cornlands,  
Then he may be my son, and equal Orestes in honor,  
Even my youngest born, who is nurtured in every  
abundance;  
Yea, three daughters of mine there be in my beautiful palace, —  
Even Chrysóthemis, fair Laodikè, Iphianassa, —  
Whichsoever of these he prefers, no gift-giving either,  
Her he may take to the dwelling of Peleus his bride,  
with a dower  
Greater than ever before was given by man to a  
daughter.  
Added thereto he shall have as a gift seven populous  
cities,  
Even Kardamylè, Enopè with it, and Hirè the grassy,  
Likewise Pherè the sacred, and also deep-meadowed  
Antheia,  
Aye, and lovely Aipeia, and Pedasos covered with  
vineyards, —  
All set close to the sea, of sandy Pylos the confines.  
Dwelling within them are men who abound in flocks  
and in cattle,  
Men who, in giving of gifts, as a god will hold him  
in honor,  
Men who, under his sway, will obey his beneficent  
edicts.

This, all this would I give him and do, so he cease  
his resentment.

Let him renounce it, — Hades is always hard and  
relentless,

Therefore, also, to mortals of all the gods is most  
hated.

Even to me let him yield as a man whose rank is the  
greater,

Aye, and because of the deference due to a person  
his elder."

Then, for rejoinder, responded the knightly Geren-  
ian, Nestor: —

"O Atreides, most noble, thou king of men, Aga-  
memnon,

Gifts no man would despise thou wouldst offer to  
princely Achilles:

Come, let us brook not a moment's delay in sending  
him envoys:

Ay, whom I shall select let them consent to the  
mission:

Phoinix, the darling of Zeus, I designate first, to  
conduct them,

Then, as the envoys, Aias the mighty and godlike  
Odysseus:

With them let Odios go and Eurybates also, as  
heralds.

Ho! for our hands bring water, and order a reverent  
silence,  
While to Zeus son of Kronos we pray, and invoke his  
compassion."

Thus he spake, and his words seemed good to the  
company present.  
Straightway over their hands was water poured by  
the heralds,  
Also the bowls were filled to the brim with wine, and  
the pages  
Passed it around unto all, with the cups filled full for  
libation.  
When they libation had poured, and had drunk to  
their full satisfaction,  
Forth they fared from the camp of their host, Agamemnon Atreides.  
On them many a charge laid the knightly Gerenian,  
Nestor,  
Tipping the wink to the envoys both, but most to  
Odysseus,  
How to maneuver to capture the heart of the warrior,  
Achilles.

So on their mission they went, and the sea roared loud  
by the pathway,  
Earnestly praying Poseidon the while, earth-shaker,  
earth-holder,

Begging his aid to prevail on the haughty heart of Achilles.

On to the Myrmidon's barracks they fared, and Achilles they found there

Playing a high-pitched lute, and soothing his soul with its music —

Beautiful lute of a curious make, with a cross-bar of silver,

Taken by him from the spoils when he captured Eëtion's city —

Thus he solaced his soul, and was singing the glories of heroes.

Opposite him Patroklos was sitting, alone, and in silence,

Waiting, expectantly watching his lord till he ceased from his singing.

Right then in stepped the envoys, Odysseus leading, and silent

Stood there before him. At once, and full of amazement, Achilles

Lyre in hand, sprang up from the seat whereon he was sitting.

So, in equal amaze, Patroklos rose when he saw them.

Then, with a courteous greeting, outspoke swift-footed Achilles: —

“Welcome! ’t is friends indeed that are come —  
the need must be pressing —

Men who, my wrath notwithstanding, are yet of  
Achaïans the dearest."

Promptly, then, to Patroklos he called, who was  
standing anigh him:—

"Son of Menoitios, this is the time for a bowl that  
is larger.

Stronger mix thou the draught, and for each a cupful  
make ready,

Seeing the dearest of friends are the men now under  
my roof-tree."

Thus he said, and Patroklos complied with the  
words of his comrade:

Straightway a meat-block huge he cast adown in the  
firelight,

Then laid on it a fat goat's loin and a saddle of  
mutton,

Also the chine of a hog, a monster, cut with the fat on.  
These Automedon held while the meats Achilles  
disjointed;

Then into slices he cut them with skill, and with  
spits he transfixed them,

All while a roaring fire was kindled by stately Pa-  
troklos.

After the fire burned down and the flames were  
completely extinguished,

First, having spread out the coals, they stretched  
out the spits thereover,



Sprinkled on savory salt, and rested the spits on the  
fire-dogs.

Now when the meats had been broiled to a turn, and  
laid upon platters,

Next Patroklos took bread, and dealt it forth on  
the table

Heaped in beautiful baskets, — the meats being  
served by Achilles.

Then, by the opposite wall, and facing gifted Odys-  
seus,

Down sat Achilles himself, and bade his comrade  
Patroklos

Sacrifice make to the gods; and he, in the fire, cast  
oblations.

All, then, put forth their hands to the good cheer  
lying before them.

Now, when all had appetite sated for eating and  
drinking,

Aias nodded to Phoinix; but gifted Odysseus, per-  
ceiving,

Filled his goblet with wine, and offered a toast to  
Achilles: —

“Here’s to thy health Achilles; a bountiful ban-  
quet we lack not,

Either before, at the camp of our king, Agamemnon  
Atreides,

Nay, nor here right now, for *thy* cheer is good and abundant.

Ah, it is no mere regard for the trencher that renders us anxious,

Nay, it is awful disaster, now staring, prince, in our faces, —

That is our dread, for the fate of our ships now hangs in the balance,

And, if thy powerful aid be denied us, great is the danger.

Close by our shipping and wall to-night have the high-hearted Trojans

Pitched their encampment, with mighty allies, and lo, at this moment

Many a campfire are burning their host throughout, and no longer

Count on being withstood, but expect to fall on our shipping.

Dread Zeus, too, son of Kronos, to them encouraging omens

Sheweth in thunder; and Hector, in prowess greatly exulting

Rageth exceedingly, trusting in Zeus, and nowise regardeth

Men, nor even the gods; for pestilent fury hath seized him.

Now of glorious Dawn he prayeth her speediest coming,

Threatening first to cut from our ships the ensigns  
as trophies,  
Then to burn them with ravening fire, and all us  
Achaïans  
Slaughter beside them at will while by smoke con-  
fused and bewildered.  
Dread is the fear of my heart lest all that Hector  
hath threatened,  
That may the gods fulfil, and for us the doom be  
determined  
Here in Troyland to perish, afar from horse-nour-  
ishing Argos.  
Up, then, late though it be, — in our last extremity  
save us!  
Thou wilt repent when the evil is done, and remedy  
find not,  
So, bethink thee to save e'er our day of calamity  
cometh.  
Comrade, verily thus wert thou charged by Peleus,  
thy father,  
That same day that he sent thee from Phthia to join  
Agamemnon:  
'Matchless strength, my son, is a gift Athena and  
Hera  
Give or not as they will, but do thou thine impet-  
uous spirit  
Hold subdued in thy breast, for the mild disposition  
is better;

Keep thee from quarrels, those breeders of bane, and  
so will the Argives

Hold thee in greater approval, the youths as well as  
the elders.'

Such was the old man's charge, and thou hast forgotten;  
but even

*Now* halt; bridle the wrath that embitters thy soul;  
Agamemnon

Adequate gifts would give thee didst thou but cease  
thy resentment.

Hearken to me while I number the gifts he hath  
publicly promised:

Seven tripods by fire untouched, and of gold ten  
talents,

Shining cauldrons twenty, and twelve sound,  
powerful horses,

Horses that win in the race, and prizes have taken for  
swiftness.

Far from poor would any man be who had such a  
fortune,

Neither of much-prized gold be unpossessed, to  
whose coffers

Came all the prizes these horses have won for King  
Agamemnon.

Seven women, moreover, well-skilled in handiwork  
matchless,

Lesbian dames who in beauty are fair mid the fairest  
of women

Women he chose for himself when populous Lesbos  
was taken, —

These will he give, and among them the woman  
whereof he deprived thee,

Even the daughter of Briseus; and solemn oath in  
addition

Make that he never hath lain with the girl as man  
with a woman.

All these things I have named shall be thine forth-  
with; and whenever

Priam's great city the gods shall grant our forces  
to plunder,

Then a shipload of gold and of bronze thou shalt  
lade on thy galleys,

Entering in for the booty when we Achaians divide  
it;

Also of Trojan women thy pick thou may'st take of  
the twenty

Fairest amid them all next after Helen of Argos.

When to Achaian Argos we come, that udder of  
cornlands,

Then shalt thou be his son, and equal Orestes in  
honor,

Even his youngest born, who is nurtured in every  
abundance;

Yea, three daughters of his there be in his beautiful  
palace, —

Even Chrysóthemis, fair Laodikè, Iphianassa, —

Whichsoever of these is thy choice, no gift-giving  
either,  
Her thou may'st take as thy bride to Peleus's  
house, with a dower  
Greater than ever before was given by man to a  
daughter.  
Added thereto thou shalt have as a gift seven popu-  
lous cities,  
Even Kardaínylè, Enopè with it, and Hirè the  
grassy,  
Likewise Pherè the sacred, and with them deep-  
meadowed Anthefa,  
Aye, and lovely Aipefa, and Pedasos covered with  
vineyards, —  
All set close to the sea, of sandy Pylos the con-  
fines.  
Dwelling within them are men who abound in  
flocks and in cattle,  
Men who, in giving of gifts, as a god will hold thee  
in honor,  
Men who, under thy sway, will obey thy beneficent  
edicts.  
All these amends would he make, so thou but abate  
thy resentment.  
If, however, Atreides is hateful, and now none the  
less so,  
Both the man and his gifts, do thou for the other  
Achaians,

Fainting throughout their hosts, have pity, and thee  
will they honor  
E'en as a god; for great is the chance of glory be-  
fore thee:  
Even thou mightest slay Hector, for he would surely  
confront thee,  
Led by a fatal madness; for none, he boasteth, can  
match him,  
None of the Danaans all who hither were borne in  
our shipping."

Straightway, then, for rejoinder, outspake swift-  
footed Achilles: —  
"Zeus-born son of Laërtes, Odysseus quick of con-  
trivance,  
Needs must I say my say in terms that are blunt and  
explicit,  
Just as I feel, and shall do in the end, lest you at my  
fireside  
Ply me, each in his turn, with importunities dove-  
like;  
Hateful to me is the wretch as the gates of nether-  
most Hades  
Whoso one thought in his heart concealeth, and  
speaketh another,  
I, be ye sure, will make a reply as sincerity dictates:—  
Nowise shall I be persuaded by King Agamemnon  
Atreides,

No, nor the Danaans all, methinks, for no gratitude follows  
E'en though in battle unceasing one wars with foe-men forever.  
Equal the loiterer's share, and his who forces the fighting;  
Held in equal esteem is the skulk and also the brave man;  
Death is alike the doom of the man that doth, and doth nothing.  
Profit to me is there none for all my anguish of spirit,  
None, though ever my life have I staked on the issue of combat.  
E'en as a henbird bringeth her unfledged nestlings a tit-bit  
Straightway she take it, and yet all the time she herself goeth hungry,  
Even so I have ceased not to watch nights many and sleepless,  
Yea, and through days of blood have toiled in carnage incessant,  
Warring with men who fought as men will fight for their women.  
Twelve, by voyaging in ships, are the cities of men<sup>1</sup>  
I have plundered;

<sup>1</sup> "Cities of men" in the Iliad and Odyssey seems to mean what the Hebrews would express by "urbes gentium," i. e., foreign cities, and in particular those approached by sea.



Marching on foot in this country of Troy I have  
captured eleven.

Out of these cities all, the treasures many and  
goodly

Took I, and brought them all and gave Agamemnon  
Atreides.

He, remaining behind by the bounding ships and  
encampment,

Took them; and much he kept, and only a little  
apportioned.

As to the rest, what he gave to the kings and chief-  
tains as prizes,

Theirs continue untouched; and me, alone, of  
Achaians,

Me he despoiled; the bride of my choice he holdeth,  
and let him

Sleep with her! What are we here for, we Argives  
fighting the Trojans!

Why was an army collected and hither led by  
Atreides!

Why, except for lovely-haired Helen? Are, then, the  
Atreidai

Sole and alone of the children of men in loving their  
bedmates?

Nay, but whoever hath come to the stature and wis-  
dom of manhood

Loveth and cherisheth her who is his, as even I this  
one

Loved from the depths of my heart, albeit a spear-taken captive.

Now, then, when from mine arms he hath wrested my prize, and deceived me,

Let him not try his persuasions on me, he cannot cajole me.

So, Odysseus, with thee and the rest of the Danaan princes

Let him think out his schemes for warding fire from his shipping.

Verily, much hath he done, already, without mine assistance,

Even builded a wall, and run a ditch all about it

Wide and deep, and therein hath he many palisades planted,

Yet, with all these defences, the might of man-slaying Hector

Hath he not power to withstand; but while I fought for the Argives

Never did Hector dare sally at all from the walls of the city,

Barely coming as far as the Skaian Gates and the oak-tree;

Once, when I was alone he faced, but barely escaped me.

Now, since it pleaseth me not to fight any more against Hector,

After sacrifice offered to Zeus and all the immortals,

After my ships are fitted and launched, thou shalt  
see on the morrow —

See, that is, if thou carest to look, and such things  
interest thee —

Breasting at early dawn the Hellespont teeming with  
fishes

These my ships, and my men on board right eager  
at rowing;

Then, if a prosperous voyage is granted by mighty  
Poseidon,

Three days later should find me at home in luxu-  
riant Phthia.

There great riches are mine which I left like a fool  
when I came here;

Thither I also will carry the gold won here. and the  
ruddy

Bronze, and the dark-gray iron, and likewise the  
fair-girdled women,

All, at least, that are mine by lot; but the prize of  
my valor

That hath the king, Agamemnon Atreides, taken  
despite me.

Say all this in reporting my attitude, nothing  
omitting,

Openly say it, to waken the wrath of the other  
Achaïans

When he again may attempt to beguile some Danaan  
haply,

Ever clad that he is in shamelessness; me, in the face,  
he  
Never would venture to look, no matter how dog-like  
his nature.  
Counsel with him will I take not again, nor enter-  
prise either,  
Cheated so utterly once, and wronged! again shall  
he never  
Practice deceptions on me! enough hath he done it!  
but blindly  
On let him speed to destruction, by Zeus bereft of  
his senses!

“Hateful to me are his gifts, I despise the man so  
completely.  
Not if ten times as much he would give, or twenty-  
fold even  
More than all he hath now, and all he may ravish  
from others,  
Not if he offered the treasures Orchomenos hath, or  
Egyptian  
Thebes, where lie in the houses of men the greatest  
possessions —  
Thebes with its hundred gates through each whereof  
twice an hundred  
Warriors sally on chariots borne, arrayed with their  
horses —

Not if gifts as the sands of the sea or as dust he would  
give me,  
Not even so will my soul be reconciled toward Agamemnon  
Ere he hath paid me in full for his soul-embittering  
insult.

“Daughter I never will wed of Agamemnon Atreides,  
Not if she glow with the glory of gold like fair  
Aphroditè,  
Not though she vie in accomplishments rare with  
wise-eyed Athena,  
Not even so will I wed her; so let him seek an  
Achaian  
Better befitting his rank, some man more kingly  
than I am!  
For, if the gods shall graciously save me to come  
to my homestead,  
Peleus will get me a wife, nor need Agamemnon’s  
assistance.  
Many Achaian maids there be in Hellas and Phthia,  
Daughters of mighty chiefs who rule the cities they  
dwell in,  
Whence I can take my choice, and get an acceptable  
helpmeet.  
Many a time hath over me swept an impulse to marry,  
Settle down, and rejoice in the wealth which Peleus  
possesseth;

For, as compared with life, as naught are the riches  
of Ilios,

Even if tales be true of that luxurious city  
Told of its days of peace e'er the Danaans came; yea,  
as nothing

Even the wealth that the threshold of stone of the  
Archer within it

Holdeth in rocky Pytho, the temple of Phoibos  
Apollo.

Herd of cattle and fatling flocks are easy to  
plunder;

Shining tripods and chestnut steeds are easy to  
purchase;

Ah! but the life of a man is not subject for raiding,  
or barter,

No, nor returneth again after leaping the fence of  
the body.

For, saith my mother, the goddess, Thetis the silvery-  
footed,

Twain are the fates appointed to bear me on to my  
death-doom:

Here if I choose to remain to win from the Trojans  
their city,

Lost to me is return, but my glory abideth forever;

If, to my own dear home I return, the land of my  
fathers,

Lost is enduring fame, but length of days is my  
portion, —

Aye, and the death-shadow dark will linger long in its coming.

Also the rest would I counsel to sail for their homes,  
for you never

High Troy's fall will accomplish; for wide-eyed Zeus  
of a surety

Over her holdeth his hand, and filleth her people with  
courage.

So, do you, going back to the Danaan chieftains  
who sent you,

Tell your tidings outright, — for that is your duty as  
elders, —

Giving them time to imagine some different plan, and  
a better,

One that will save them their shipping and men, for  
this will not serve them,

This which dependeth on me, for my wrath is nowise  
abated.

Phoinix had better remain overnight, and sail on the  
morrow

Homeward with me; if he wisheth, that is, for I  
would not compel him."

Thus he spake; and his hearers were hushed, and  
deep was the silence,

Thrilled by the power of his words, and his strong  
and impassioned denial.

Finally, after a little, the knightly veteran, Phoinix,  
Burst into tears and spake, for he trembled with  
fears for the shipping: —

“If, indeed, on return thy heart is determined,  
Achilles,  
If, for thy wrath, thou doomest our ships to fiery  
destruction,  
How could I here be left, alone, dear child, and  
without thee?  
With thee here was I sent by the time-worn warrior,  
Peleus,  
Formerly, when from Phthia he sent thee to King  
Agamemnon,  
Still in thy callow youth, untried in the conduct of  
battles,  
Aye, and in public speech, — the ways men grow unto  
greatness.  
That was the reason he sent me in all such arts to  
instruct thee,  
Training thee up to be strong in debate and mighty  
in action.  
So, then, from thee, dear child, I would not consent  
to be parted,  
Not if, to win that consent, the gods should promise  
to make me  
Young and blooming again, my age all gone and  
my wrinkles,



Just as I was when Hellas I left with its beautiful  
women,  
Fleeing my father's upbraidings, Amyntor Ormení-  
ides, seeing  
Hot was his wrath against me because of a beautiful  
slave-girl,  
One he intrigued with himself, and his wife, my  
mother, dishonored;  
She, my mother, never stopped begging that I  
would forestall him  
Making love to the girl till she tired of her aged  
admirer.  
Her I obeyed and did it; but soon my father, per-  
ceiving,  
Cursed me again and again, and called on the awful  
Avengers  
Praying that I should be sonless; this curse the gods  
have accomplished,  
Even the Zeus of the world below and Persephone  
direful.  
Father he was, yet a moment I purposed to slay him;  
but haply  
Some immortal forefended the deed by placing  
within me  
Thought of the speech of people and mankind's  
many reproaches,  
So as to bear not the name of a parricide mid the  
Achaians.

I can assure you that friends and kinsmen, hanging  
about me,  
Kept me there in his halls with many an urgent  
entreaty;  
Many the goodly sheep and trail-footed, crumple-  
horned cattle  
Slaughtered these hangers on; and swine all bursting  
with fatness  
Many they stretched at their length to singe in the  
flame of Hephaistos,  
Also much was the wine they drained from the old  
man's wine-jars.  
Nine were the nights that the whole night long they  
slumbered about me,  
Guards they had in relays, and never quenched were  
the fires:  
Under the high colonnade of the well-fenced court-  
yard the one was,  
Fronting the doors of my chamber within the porch  
was the other;  
But, on the tenth, when nether-world-night descended  
upon me,  
Then did I the doors of my chamber, though cun-  
ningly fitted,  
Break, and thereout I stepped and vaulted the fence  
of the courtyard  
Easily, all unobserved of the guards, the men and  
the women.

Then did I flee afar through the open country of  
Hellas,  
Ending my journey at Phthia, the deep-soiled mother  
of cattle,  
Even to Peleus the king; and graciously did he re-  
ceive me;  
Aye, and he loved me well as the only son of a father,  
One born late in his life, and heir of his many pos-  
sessions.  
Rich he made me, and gave besides much people to  
govern:  
So, in the confines of Phthia I dwelt, the Delopians  
ruling.  
Even great as thou art I made thee, godlike Achilles,  
Giving mine own heart's love; and never wouldst  
thou in thy childhood  
Go to a feast with another, nor take thy meat in  
the palace,  
Never till perched on my knees, and insisting that  
I and I only  
Feed thee with dainties, first cutting for thee, and  
holding thy wine-cup.  
Many a time thou my tunic hast wet all down on the  
bosom,  
Drooling the wine from thy mouth in the trying  
days of thy childhood.  
Thus for the sake of thee much have I suffered, and  
many my labors,

Always thinking of this, that the gods forever denied  
me

Child of my own; so, like to a son I, godlike Achilles,  
Made thee, that thou mightest save me betimes in  
the day of disaster.

Up, then, Achilles, and chasten thy turbulent soul;  
it befits thee

Not, thy pitiless heart; the very gods are prevailed  
on —

They whose majesty, glory, and might are greater  
than ours —

Even they, by passion of prayer and sacrifice offered  
After transgression and sin, are moved — the divine  
by the human.

Prayers of contrition are daughters, remember, of  
mighty Kronion;

Lame, and with agonized faces, and eyes distorted  
and downcast,

Ever they go in pursuit of Temptation, and halt in  
their going;

She, however, Temptation, is strong and nimble,  
and therefore

Far outrunneth them all, and getteth a start that is  
world-wide,

Leading mankind astray, which the Prayers try to  
remedy later.

Whoso respecteth these daughters of Zeus when they  
come to entreat him,

Him they benefit much, and to his entreaties they  
hearken;  
Whoso showeth despite when they come, and denieth  
them roughly,  
Straight to their Father Kronion they go, and urge  
that Temptation  
Follow that man, and beguile him to sin and its sure  
retribution.  
See to it, then, Achilles, that thou these Prayer-  
Maidens honor,  
Even as brave men before thee have done, and turned  
from their anger.  
Now, if Atreides were giving no gifts, nor promising  
others,  
I would not urge thee to cease from thy wrath toward  
a man unrepentant,  
No, nor succor the Argives, however abjectly they  
ask it;  
But, since much he is ready to give, and more in the  
future,  
Seeing the men he hath sent to implore are the flower  
of the army,  
Likewise the dearest to thee, — why, disdain not  
the pleadings of such men,  
No, nor their journey; before this thou didst not ill  
to be angry.  
Such we are told of the heroes of old in tales of their  
glory,

Even their warriors true, albeit transported with  
anger, —

They were won over by gifts, and yielded to words of  
contrition.

One illustration I think of, 't is old, or at least is not  
recent,

Just how it was; and amid you, who all are friends,  
I will tell it:

Once about Kalydon city grim war was raging, and  
bloodshed,

'Twixt the Kouretes and war-like Aitolians. Stoutly  
the latter

Struggled to save their town, fair Kalydon, whilst  
the Kouretes

Made determined assault to storm the place and de-  
stroy it.

Now, before this, a pest had gold-throned Artemis  
sent them,

Angered because of a slight; for, Oineus, in season of  
harvest,

Offerings made to the rest of the gods on the brow of  
his orchard,

Yet, to her, offered naught, tho' daughter of Zeus  
the all-mighty.

Whether the hero forgot her or meant it, great was  
his folly.

So, in her wrath, this goddess divine, the insatiate  
archer,

Sent on the land a boar, a monster, white-tusked and  
savage,  
One that, day after day, wrought ills in Oineus's  
orchard,  
Felling tall trees torn up by the roots all blooming  
for apples.  
Finally killed was the pest by Oineus's son, Mel-  
eager<sup>1</sup>  
After from many a city he gathered together its  
huntsmen,  
Aye, and its hounds; for it might not be quelled by  
any few mortals, —  
Such a monster he was, and many men brought to  
their death-fires.  
Then the goddess brought war on the land, a war for  
the trophies,  
Even the wild boar's head and its hide all shaggy with  
bristles,  
Seeing that both the Kouretes and haughty Aitolians  
claimed them.  
Now, while the gifted in war, Meleager, took part in  
the fighting,  
So long disasters befell the Kouretes and, spite of  
their numbers,  
Even outside the wall they failed to hold their position.  
When Meleager, however, in wrath at his mother  
Altheia, —

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced Mel e á ger.

Wrath such as swelleth the heart and embittereth  
even the wise man, —

(Seeing his mother had cursed him for grief at his  
slaying her brother,

Yea, had prayed to the gods, and smitten the earth in  
her passion,

Madly demanding of Hades and awful Persephoneia  
Death for her son; and her the Avenger that  
walketh in darkness

Heard in the world of gloom with heart that knoweth  
no mercy;)

When, embittered by this, he kept aloof from the  
fighting,

Idly staying at home with his wife, the fair Kleopatra,  
Soon on their gates burst the fury of war, and shaken  
their towers.

Then the Aitolian elders implored Meleager, and  
sent him

Priests of the gods who were highest in rank to ad-  
monish, and beg him

Forth to come and defend them; and mighty reward  
did they promise: —

Even wherever on Kalydon's fields the land was the  
richest,

There to select for himself a demesne exceeding in  
beauty,

Fifty plough-acres wide, one-half devoted to vine-  
yards,



Half of it clear, smooth plough-land, to high cultivation adapted.

Much, too, prayed him for pity that time-worn veteran, Oineus,

Clambering up to the threshold which led to his lofty apartment,

Shaking the well-shod doors, and imploring his son to defend them.

Aye, too, even his sisters and queenly mother besought him.

All the more he denied them; and much, too, prayed his companions,

Even those that were best of them all, and to him were the dearest.

Yet not even all this the soul in his bosom persuaded,

Not till his very chamber was heavily stormed, and the foemen

Started to mount the towers and fire the magnificent city;

Then, when reduced to this strait, his wife with wild lamentations

Meleager besought, and pictured before him the horrors —

All that befall a people in case their city is captured—

How that the warriors are slain, and fires lay the city in ashes,

Also how strangers lead captive their children and  
deep-girdled women.

So overcome was his soul when he heard these horrors  
recounted

Straightway he rushed and girded about him his  
glittering armor.

Thus the Aitolian people he saved from the day of  
destruction,

Moved by an impulse his own; and the gifts, so many  
and gracious,

Never were paid him at all, and he saved them from  
ruin for all that.

So may not *thy* mind be darkened as his was, nor  
let an immortal

Lead thee so far astray, dear child; for less would  
thy grace be,

Saving the ships when on fire. So yet, while gifts  
are forthcoming,

Join us; and like to a god will the grateful Achaians  
esteem thee.

If, without gifts, thou joinest the fray when the army  
is shattered,

Never will any such honor be thine though thou save  
it from ruin."

Achilles still remains stubborn; and some debate follows  
wherein Aias tells him that the gifts offered would be  
adequate recompense for the murder of a brother or son,  
and that he makes an unreasonable fuss over the loss of  
one woman when he has just been offered seven, and much

beside. Achilles responds that he cannot so easily forget that he has been insulted by Agamemnon with as little compunction as if he were "A sojourner unhonored;" and he somewhat impatiently dismisses the embassy. They return; and Odysseus reports that their mission has failed, whereat the Achaians are cast down and silent, but

Finally, after a little, spake Diomed good at the war-cry: —

"Son of Atreus, most noble, thou king of men, Agamemnon,

Would that thou never hadst sought reconcilment with matchless Achilles,

Offering numberless gifts; consequential before, and enough so,

Now by thy grace thou hast made him more high-hal and-mighty than ever.

Leave him severely alone, whether coming or sulking; at some time

Battle he will when the spirit shall move, and the gods shall arouse him.

Come, the advice I now give you let every man of us follow:

Go ye now to your rest with hearts and the needs of the body

Strengthened with bread and with wine; in these are courage and valor.

Then, when dawneth to-morrow the beautiful rose-fingered morning,

Straightway in front of the ships array thy people and  
horses,  
Cheering them on, O Atreides, and fight thyself mid  
the foremost."

Thus he spake; and the Danaan kings all roundly  
applauded,  
So were they cheered by the boldness of Diomed,  
tamer of horses.  
Then, having made libation and gone to their several  
quarters,  
There they turned to their rest and snatched the  
blessing of slumber.

## BOOK XI<sup>1</sup>

STRAIGHTWAY Dawn from her couch by the side of  
high-born Tithonos  
Rose to gladden immortals and men with the splendor  
of daybreak,  
Zeus fell Discord dispatched to the swift-faring ships  
of the Argives, —  
Discord perverse, and she bore in her hands the signal  
of battle.  
Halting atop of the monster, the great, black ship of  
Odysseus,  
Which, in the centre, was placed where shouts could  
be heard by the endmost —  
Both at his camp, on the one hand, by great Telamonian Aias,  
And, on the other, Achilles, — for they at the ends of  
the army  
Stationed their stately ships, on strength and prowess  
reliant, —

<sup>1</sup> This book is an important factor in the story for two reasons: First, the wounding of the principal Achaian heroes serves to explain why Achilles relented in part in Book XVI; and second, by the same means Achilles and Hector are left substantially alone, and therefore far more striking figures, in Book XXII. Book X, which has no connection with the story, is omitted from this translation.

There, alighting, the goddess in shrill tones, mighty  
and awful,  
Shrieked, and inspired unquenchable strength in all  
the Achaians,  
Firing their hearts to persist in combat and battle  
unceasing.  
Straightway then grew the war far sweeter to  
them than returning  
Home in their hollow ships to the much-loved land  
of their fathers.

Then with stentorian call Atreides bade the Achaians  
Arm for the conflict; and mid them he donned his  
glittering harness.  
First his beautiful greaves he put on, with anklets  
of silver,  
Next in order he bound on his bosom a wonderful  
breastplate,  
One that Kinyras gave him aforetime in guise of a  
guest-gift:  
Hearing the mighty report, for its fame spread even  
to Cyprus,  
How that the Argives were planning a great expedi-  
tion to Troy-land —  
That was the reason he gave it, the favor to win of  
the leader.  
Decking it out there were on it ten stripes of dark  
blue enamel,

Twelve, moreover, of gold, and twenty of tin; and  
    enameled  
On it were dragons six, to the neck of the wearer  
    upreaching,  
Three on either hand, like rainbows, such as  
    Kronion  
Setteth athwart the clouds, a marvel to pondering  
    mortals;  
Over his shoulders his sword then slung, and in it  
    were rivets  
Shining, and fashioned of gold; and holding the sword  
    was a scabbard  
Wholly of silver, attached to the belt by chains that  
    were golden.  
Next his shield he upraised that protecteth in des-  
    perate combat,  
Covered with curious markings, for round about it  
    were circles  
Ten, of bronze, and on it were bosses twenty and  
    brilliant  
Fashioned of tin, and its central boss was black with  
    enamel.  
Crowning the work was the Gorgon, and frightful  
    her face, at beholders  
Gazing with baleful stare, and beside her were Terror  
    and Panic.  
Fastened to this was a baldric of silver, and squirm-  
    ing upon it

Rested a snake of enamel, and three were the heads  
of the monster  
Turning in different ways, tho' the neck of the dragon  
was single.  
Then, a helm two-crested he placed on his head, four-  
banded,  
Even a horsehair crest, and it nodded terrors above  
him.  
Two stout spears he finally seized, bronze-headed,  
keen-pointed.  
Far from his martial form the sheen was reflected  
to heaven,  
Whence came thunder loud, for thence Athena and  
Hera  
Honored thus with salute the king of golden My-  
kenai.

All the several chieftains now bade their charioteers  
Keep their horses aback by the trench, in order, and  
ready,  
While they themselves on foot went hither and  
thither, in armor  
Fully equipped; and unquenchable shouts saluted  
the morning.  
Far ahead of the horses they went by the trench, and  
the horsemen  
Followed a little behind; and among them an omin-  
ous uproar

---



Kronides sent, and a bloody dew he drave from the  
ether,  
Warning that many and great he had doomed to  
the mansions of darkness.

Up on the slope of the plain the Trojans were mar-  
shalled against them,  
Following Hector the mighty and matchless Poly-  
damas with him,  
Also his men with Aineias, then honored as god by  
the Trojans,  
Likewise three sons of Antenor,<sup>1</sup> young Akamas,  
godlike Agenor,<sup>1</sup>  
Polybos, also, the eldest, in stature all like im-  
mortals.  
There mid the foremost men shone the full-orbed  
buckler of Hector.  
Just as thro' rifted clouds a star of omen ap-  
peareth,  
Gleaming, and then in the shadowy clouds is gone in  
a moment,  
Even so fitfully Hector was seen, at times with the  
foremost,  
Then, in the rear giving orders; and, clad in glitter-  
ing armor,  
Shone as shineth the lightning of Zeus who wieldeth  
the aegis.

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced An té nor, A gé nor.

Then both armies, as reapers engaged in a contest of reaping

Drive their swaths thro' a rich man's field where grain is abundant,

Either barley or wheat, and the thick stalks tumble in handfuls,

So the Achaians and Trojans, with furious dash at each other,

Slew, nor the one nor the other had thought of panic accursèd.

Equal the conflict was waged, and equal the heads of the fallen,

Both sides charging like wolves; and Discord saw and exulted.

She alone of the gods was at hand, the other immortals

Being regardless, and sitting at home in the dells of Olympos.

All were mightily wroth at Kronion who darkeneth heaven,

Knowing his sovereign will to cover the Trojans with glory.

Naught cared he for their impotent rage, but, apart from the others,

Sat resplendent in glory and gazed at the city of Priam,

Then at the Danaan ships, at the sheen, at the slain, and the slaying.

While it was morning still, and day divine was increasing,  
So long the missiles of death flew thick, and the havoc was equal;  
But, at the hour when a man chopping wood prepar-  
eth his dinner,  
Off in a mountain glen, and his hands have surfeit  
of labor  
Felling stupendous trees, and weariness dulleth his  
spirit,  
And, for his daily bread, alonging seizeth his stomach;  
Right then the Argives asserted their strength and  
brake the battalions,  
Calling their friends thro' the lines; and among them  
King Agamemnon  
First made a dash and took off a man, the chieftain  
Biénor,  
Both himself and his comrade, Oíleus his charioteer.  
He, be sure, from the chariot sprang, and faced  
Agamemnon,  
But, mid his onset, the sharp spear came and, hitting  
his forehead,  
Helmet brim, tho' heavy with bronze, availed not to  
stop it, —  
Nay, but it pierced both that and the bone, and the  
brain underneath it  
Shattered; and thus he died, but fell while gallantly  
charging.

The sixty-four lines that follow describe the death of several other Trojans, at the hands of Agamemnon, but are not important to the story.

Out of the darts and grime, from the soil and  
turmoil of battle,  
Zeus kept Hector away; but keen pursuit Agamemnon  
Kept on the Trojan flight, and he urged the Danaans  
sharply.  
Back by the tomb of Ilos, the ancient Dardanos'  
grandson,  
Down thro' the plain, by the fig-tree wild, they  
sped in a panic,  
Seeking the city; and ever behind Agamemnon  
Atreides  
Followed with threatening yell, and his hands were  
red with their life-blood.  
But, when once they had come to the Skaian Gates  
and the oak-tree,  
There they came to a stand and waited for comrades  
belated.  
Many were still in the midst of the plain, and were  
fleeing like cattle  
Scattered in flight by a lion which cometh in darkness  
at midnight;  
All hath he scattered, but one of the kine is marked  
for destruction;  
That one is seized in his powerful teeth and its neck  
hath been broken

First, and then he lappeth the blood and devoureth  
the entrails;  
So Atreides pursued them, the king of men, Agamemnon,  
Slaying the hindermost ever; and on they fled in  
confusion.  
Many on face and many on back fell out of their  
chariots  
Under the hands of Atreides, whose spear was mad  
in its raging.  
When he was just at the point of reaching the walls  
of the city,  
Right then the father of men and of gods, descending  
from heaven,  
Seated himself on the summits of Ida, his hand on  
the lightning.  
Straightway golden-winged Iris he sent, and told  
her his message: —

“Haste thee and go, swift Iris, and bear this message  
to Hector:  
Even as long as he seeth the leader of hosts, Agamemnon,  
Charging in front of the fray, and wasting the ranks  
of the Trojans,  
Solong let *him* keep back, but bid the rest of the people  
Keep up fight with the foe; but when he seeth  
Atreides

Leaping into his car, being smit by spear-stroke or  
arrow,  
Then will I give him the glory to slay to the Danaan  
shipping,  
E'en till the sun goeth down, and night cometh,  
sacred to darkness."

Thus he spake; and promptly obeying, wind-footed  
Iris  
Swiftly sped from the mountains of Ida to Ilios  
sacred.  
Wise-minded Priam's son she found, great crest-  
waving Hector,  
Standing alert by the chariot strong, and his heavy-  
maned horses;  
So, anigh him she drew, and thus spake swift-footed  
Iris: —

"Hector, thou son of Priam, whose will like Zeus's  
is final,  
All-father Zeus hath sent me to thee, and this is his  
message: —  
Even as long as thou seest the captain of hosts, Aga-  
memnon,  
Charging amid the foremost and thinning the lines  
of the Trojans,

So long keep from the fray, but bid the rest of the  
people  
Stubbornly fight, till, smitten by spear or by arrow,  
Atreides  
Leapeth into his car; from then is glory vouchsafed  
thee  
Even to slay till thou forcest thy way to the Danaan  
shipping,  
Aye, till the sun goeth down, and darkness endeth  
the conflict."

Now, when her errand was told, away went swift-  
footed Iris.  
Hector adown to earth from the chariot sprang in his  
armor,  
And, keen spears in his hands, went up and down  
thro' the army,  
Urging his men to the fray; and he wakened a furious  
war-din,  
And, at command, they wheeled themselves round  
and faced the Achaians.  
Also, over against them, their skirmish lines the  
Achaians  
Strengthened, and both made ready to fight, when  
King Agamemnon  
First made a dash, for he meant to be first, and lead  
in the contest.

Sing to me now, ye Muses, who dwell in Olympian  
mansions,  
Who of allies or of Trojans was first to meet Agamemnon.  
Well, Iphidimas,<sup>1</sup> son of Antenor, brave man and  
mighty,  
Bred in well-tilled Thrace, the mother of flocks, whom  
his grandsire  
Kisses, sire of his mother and also of fair-cheeked  
Theáo,  
Reared in his home as child of his own from infancy  
upward, —  
Nay, e'en when he had come to the measure of affluent  
manhood,  
Still he detained him there, and gave him his daughter  
in marriage.  
Bridegroom he left his bride when he heard of the  
Danaans' coming,  
Sailing with twelve brave ships, but these he left at  
Percôtè,  
There disembarking, and coming on foot to the  
city of Priam;  
That was the man dashing forward to brave Agamemnon  
Atreides.  
When they had come right near, and were hurrying  
toward one another,

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced I phid' i mas.



Eager Atreides missed, and his spear passed by his  
opponent.  
Him Iphidimas hit on the girdle, under the breast-  
plate,  
And, in his strong arm trusting, himself pressed on  
with a spear-thrust,  
Yet he pierced not the belt; far otherwise, seeing the  
spear-point  
Flattened and bent like lead when it struck the plat-  
ing of silver.  
Seizing the shaft of the spear the wide-ruling king,  
Agamemnon,  
Gave it a jerk, like a furious lion, wrenching the  
weapon  
Forth from Iphidimas' hand, and pierced his neck  
with his falchion.  
Thus Iphidimas fell, and slept the slumber of  
iron,  
Hapless, afar from his wife, defending a city of  
strangers, —  
Bride whose favors he knew not, but gave for her  
many a bride-gift.  
Kine an hundred he gave at the time, and promised  
a thousand  
Goats and sheep altogether, for countless the herds  
that he pastured.  
Then, from the spot where he fell, Agamemnon  
Atreides in triumph

Strode up the Danaan lines with the spoil of his  
sumptuous armor.

Kóón, illustrious hero, and first-born son of Antenor,

Witnessed his brother's fall, and his eyes were misty  
with anguish.

Up he ran by the side of Atreides, unmarked by the  
latter,

And, with his spear, his mid-arm pierced just under  
the elbow.

Through it the spear-point passed, and Atreides felt  
with a shudder;

Yet he, not even then, withdrew from the war and  
the battle,

Nay, but he dashed with his wind-nurtured spear  
after Kóón, who madly

Seized by the foot his dead brother's corse in hope  
to reclaim it,

Calling loudly for help; but while to the lines of the  
Trojans

Kóón was dragging the body, the spear of King  
Agamemnon

Reached him under the shield, and he fell on the corse  
he was dragging.

Thus two sons of Antenor, their life-span over, and  
fallen

Under the self-same hand, went down to the kingdom  
of darkness.

Still Agamemnon kept on in pursuit of the rest of the  
Trojans,  
Wielding both spear and sword and huge stones  
hurling, as long as  
Forth from the wound welled the blood still warm;  
but after the flowing  
Ceased, and the sore grew dry, sharp pains quelled  
the soul of Atreides.  
Like to the piercing shaft that seizeth a woman in  
travail,  
Stinging as child-birth labor sent on by the daughters  
of Hera, —  
E'en the Eilythiai send, the givers of agony  
grievous, —  
Keen even thus were the pangs that mastered the  
soul of Atreides.  
Into his car he sprang and ordered his chariot-  
eer  
Drive amain to the Danaan camp, for his spirit was  
broken.  
First he called, and loudly he called, to the Danaans,  
saying: —

“Leaders and princes of Argos, on you now falleth  
the burden.  
Take on yourselves the duty of keeping calamitous  
war-din

Far from our sea-going ships; for Zeus, dread Arbitrator, hath not  
Suffered that I should stay and war all day with the  
Trojans."

Thus he spake, and his fair-maned horses the charioteer  
Lashed to the hollow ships; and the steeds flew, nowise reluctant,  
Breasts all covered with foam, and dust-clouds rising beneath them,  
Hasting to carry the unnerved king afar from the battle.

Hector, as soon as he saw Agamemnon leaving the action,  
Shouted afar o'er the field, alike to allies and to Trojans: —

"Trojans and Lykians, children of Dardanos, hand-to-hand fighters,  
Show yourselves men, my friends, and recall your impetuous valor.  
Gone is their mightiest man, and abundantly Zeus, son of Kronos,  
Now hath granted my prayer; so drive your storm-footed horses

Straight on the Danaan strength, and victory win  
overwhelming."

Thus he spake, and renewed in his men their might  
and their courage.

Just as haply a hunter his hounds with their white  
teeth gleaming

Setteth in hot pursuit of a fierce wild boar or a  
lion,

So Priamides Hector, with mien of terrible  
Ares,

Urged full tilt on the Danaan host his inspirited  
Trojans.

He, in the foremost line strode forward greatly ex-  
ultant,

Plunging into the fray as the mighty blast of the  
tempest

Leapeth down on the sea and lasheth its darkening  
billows.

Who, then, first, who last, by the hand of Priamides  
Hector

Fell on that fateful day when Zeus showered glory  
upon him?

Well, Asafos<sup>1</sup> was first, and Autoñoös, also Opftes,  
Later Dolops, Klytios' son, Opheltios, Horos,  
Great Ageláoös, Aisumnos, Hipponoös stedfast in  
battle —

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced A saf os.

These great Danaan leaders he slew, — and the  
multitude after.

E'en as we see tempestuous Zephyr scatter the rain-  
clouds

Gathered by swift-blowing Notos, and smite them  
with heavy tornado —

Many a swollen wave rolleth onward, and widely  
above them

Sea-spray is scattered by force of the everywhere-  
wandering tempest —

Even so thick were the low-laid heads that were  
smitten by Hector.

Then would ruin have been and deeds beyond rem-  
edy happened,

Then would the flying Achaians have fallen in rout  
on their shipping,

Save that Odysseus, just then, called out to Diomed,  
saying: —

“Friend, by what sorry mishap have we lost our  
impetuous valor?

Hither, comrade, by me! Let us stand our ground,  
for a downright

Shame would it be if our ships were captured by crest-  
waving Hector.”

Prompt was the answer of stout Diomedes, who  
spake to him, saying: —  
“Surely I will remain and endure; but small satisfaction  
Seemeth likely to follow, for Zeus, who ruleth the  
storm-cloud,  
Meaneth scant favor to us, but to Trojans might  
overwhelming.”

Both heroes slay a number of Trojans, but are finally  
wounded.

#### DIOMEDES WOUNDED BY PARIS.

Thus he said, and spear-famed Paionides spoiled of  
his armor;  
But, while exposed, Alexander, the husband of  
lovely-haired Helen,  
Drew his bow at Tydeides, himself 'gainst the pillar  
then leaning  
Over the tomb of a ruler of old, Dardanian Ilos.  
Off from Agastrophos' breast Tydeides had taken  
the corselet,  
Wrested the shield from his shoulders, and lifted the  
helmet, when Paris,  
Grasping his bow by the center, let fly, — no vain  
arrow either, —  
Hitting the flat of the foot; and clean through the  
foot sped the arrow,

Pinning it down to the earth; and Paris sprang from  
his ambush  
Laughing a laugh of derision, and boasted over him,  
saying: —

“Hit! and no vain shaft either was sped! I would  
I had smit thee  
Deep in the belly instead, and brought thee down  
with a death-wound.”

Then, and no whit dismayed, stout Diomed answered  
him, saying: —

“Archer, blackguard, vain of thy lovelock, ogler of  
women,

Would in a downright hand-to-hand fight thou hadst  
met me in armor.

Not much good to thee, then, were thy bow and  
treacherous arrows;

Grazed is the flat of my foot, that is all, — yet hark  
to thy boasting, —

Merely a scratch, which a woman might give or a  
fool of a baby,

Seeing that dull is the shaft of a man who is craven  
and worthless.

Otherwise far with me, — tho' the shaft graze ever  
so little,

Yet it is keen, soon smiteth its man, and layeth him  
lifeless.

---



Wife of the man I have smit ever teareth her cheeks  
as his widow,  
Orphaned his children; and there where the earth is  
red with his blood-stains,  
There he rotteth away, more vultures about him  
than women."

Thus he spake; and spear-famed Odysseus, drawing  
anigh him,  
Took his stand in the front; and Diomed, sitting  
behind him,  
Drew the shaft from his foot, and agony streamed  
through his body.  
Into his car he sprang, and bade his charioteer  
Drive to the ships and the Argive camp; for quelled  
was his spirit.

Left deserted was spear-famed Odysseus, not a man  
with him,  
None of the Argives, that is, for all had been taken  
with panic.  
Deeply concerned at the outlook his proud heart pondered in this wise: —

"Woe, woe, what will betide me! a burning disgrace  
would my flight be,  
Running away from a rabble; but worse would it  
be if I perish,

Taken alone, for the rest of the Argives Kronion hath scattered.

Nay, what profit is this that my heart is idly debating?

Well I know they are cowards that go skulking off from the battle,

Aye, and the better a man is in fight the greater his duty

Firmly to stand, and slay or be slain, whichever betideth."

While he was pondering thus the Trojan array was upon him,

Holding him hemmed in the midst, but found him a dangerous capture.

Even as dogs and venturesome youths close in round a boar

And, from his fastness, he cometh and, white tusks grinding in crooked

Jaws, around him they rush, but he gnasheth his teeth, and they falter,

Prudently waiting attack, for, indeed, the beast is a terror;

Even so then round gifted Odysseus the Trojans were darting.

First from above he smote in the shoulder Deïopftes,  
Then, with a spear-thrust, Thóón despatched, and Ennomos matchless;

Next Chersidimas sprang from his chariot pierced  
in the navel,  
Who, in the dust, fell prone, and clutched the earth  
in a death-grip.  
These he left, and Charops Hippasides smote with a  
spear-wound,  
Brother of high-born Sokos; and Sokos running to  
help him  
Came to Odysseus and halted anigh, and spake to  
him, saying: —

“Know, O far-famed Odysseus, insatiate of toil and  
of cunning,  
Either to-day thou shalt boast over two sons of Hip-  
pasos fallen, —  
Two such soldierly men having slain and taken their  
armor, —  
Else thou thyself shalt fall, and *my* spear deal thee  
thy death-blow.”

Just as he ceased his ponderous spear hit the shield  
of Odysseus.  
Straight through the targe it sped, and straight  
through the curious corselet,  
Tearing the flesh from the ribs, but deftly did Pallas  
Athena

Turn it from piercing the bowels; and, knowing the  
hurt was not fatal,  
Back Odysseus withdrew, and thus made answer to  
Sokos:—

“Ah, unhappy, thy day of dire destruction hath  
found thee.  
Me, no doubt, hast thou made to desist from fighting  
the Trojans,  
Yet, I say, upon thee is the gruesome death-shadow  
coming  
Here on this very day; and smitten wilt thou, as  
thou saidest,  
Grant my boast unto me, and thy soul to Hades  
the horseman.”

Thus he said, and the other turned backward and  
fled, but Odysseus  
Planted the spear in his back, and right through the  
body he drave it.  
Sokos fell with a crash ; and above him boasted  
Odysseus:—

“Sokos, Hippiasos' son, that hot-hearted tamer of  
horses,  
Death hath pursued and hath found thee, too late  
is it now to escape it.

Ah, unhappy, no father for thee, no affectionate  
mother,  
Closest thine eyes in death, but birds of ravin shall  
tear thee,  
Beating above thy corse multitudinous wings; but  
if I die  
Funeral rites, as are due, will be paid by the greatest  
Achaïans."

Thus he spake, and the ponderous spear of hot-  
hearted Sokos  
Drew from his side, and the blood welled forth, and  
deadened his spirit.  
Then the Trojans, emboldened by seeing the blood  
of Odysseus,  
Shouted down thro' the lines, and all came rushing  
against him.  
Backward he drew to the Danaan host, and yelled  
to his comrades;  
Thrice he sent forth a yell, — man's head could hold  
nothing louder, —  
Thrice Menelaus heard, and promptly called unto  
Aias: —

"Zeus-born Aias, Telamon's son, thou pride of the  
army,  
Round about me there cometh a cry from hardy  
Odysseus,

Sounding as if he were cut off alone, and pressed by  
the Trojans.

Up, let us dash down the lines! to defend him is  
plainly a duty.

Greatly I dread lest he suffer mischance, alone with  
the Trojans,

Brave tho' he be; for, if lost, the Achaians would  
grievously miss him."

Ceasing, he led the way, with mighty Aias behind him.  
Gifted Odysseus they found right sorely beset, and  
the Trojans

Leaping about him, as blood-red jackals that come  
from the mountains

Fall on an antlered stag sore hit by the shaft of a  
hunter;

Him the stag with his flying feet hath escaped while  
his life-blood

Lasted and knees were swift, but as soon as the  
treacherous arrow

Sappeth his strength, away in the hills in the  
gloom of the forest

Ravens jackals tear him in pieces; but sudden a  
lion,

Roaming highwayman, sent by the gods cometh on  
them, and quickly

Scamper the jackals away, but not till many he  
rendeth;

Even so then round Odysseus, who needed his courage and cunning,  
Many a Trojan and mighty were making assault, but the hero,  
Darting about with his spear averted his day of destruction.  
Then anigh him drew Aias and, lifting his shield like a tower,  
Suddenly stood by his side, and the Trojans ran every which way.  
Then, from the press, be sure, Menelaus led wounded Odysseus  
Holding his friend by the hand till his squire drave up with the horses.

Hector in another part of the field routs the Achaians where Macháon is wounded.

Not even now had the valiant Achaians the battle-field yielded  
But, just then, Alexander, the husband of lovely-haired Helen,  
Stayed from his valorous deeds Macháon, the trust of the soldiers.  
Mightily feared the Achaians the Trojans would take him, if 'gainst them  
Turned the tide of success, and Idomeneus called unto Nestor: —

"Nestor, thou son of Neleus, thou long-time boast  
of Achaians,  
Quick! thy chariot mount, and taking Macháōn  
beside thee  
Drive to the ships at once, and urge thy steeds to the  
utmost;  
Seeing a leech is useful in war more than many an  
other,  
Both for cutting out arrows, and soothing wounds  
with his simples."

Thus he spake; and denying him not the veteran  
Nestor  
Straightway mounted his car; and beside him  
mounted Macháōn,  
Son of a doctor of old, Asklepios, matchless physician.  
Sharply applying the lash the steeds flew, nowise reluctant,  
Back to the Argive camp, for dear to their souls was  
the horse-stall.

Hector now drives to the part of the field where Aias is  
making a strong fight.

High-throned Zeus, the All-father, in Aias now awakened a panic.  
Dazed he stood, and casting behind him his buckler  
of bull's-hide,



Started to run, glaring back on the crowd as a wild  
creature glareth;

Often he turned; but slowly, one step at a time, he  
retreated.

Even as tawny lion away from kine in a farmyard  
Dogs and husbandmen drive, nor permit him to  
capture a fatling,

Standing on guard all the livelong night; yet, crazy  
with hunger,

Ever he maketh assault, but accomplisheth nothing;  
for countless

Darts fly steadily at him, and strong are the hands  
that impel them,

Aye, and fagots on fire, which he dreadeth in spite  
of his longing;

So, in the morning, he slinketh away, sore troubled  
in spirit:

Evenso Aias, then, with aching heart, from the Trojans  
Slunk back very reluctant, for sore were his fears  
for the shipping.

Like as an ass which, in spite of the boys, presseth  
on through a corn-field,

Leisurely, — over his back hath been broken many  
a cudgel, —

Yet keepeth plodding along till he wasteth the crop,  
and the children

Keep on beating with clubs, but their strength is  
infancy's weakness;

Yet, by persistence, they drive him away — when  
sated with fodder;  
So, then, Aias the mighty was ever pursued by the  
Trojans,  
Aided by many allies which were gathered from  
many a country,  
Constantly smiting his shield with their spears;  
but oftentimes Aias  
Rallied his natural spirit and fire, and wheeled on  
the rabble,  
Then, again, turned he and fled; but he hindered  
their march to the shipping,  
Even while making his way 'twixt the Trojan and  
Danaan forces,  
Strong hands hurling about him their darts that were  
still ineffective.  
Many that longed to go farther were stopped by his  
ponderous buckler,  
Many athirst for his blood struck earth ere they  
came to his body.

Now when Eurypylos saw him, the glorious son of  
Euaimon,  
Quite overborne by the missiles, he ran and, stand-  
ing beside him,  
Made a cast with his spear, and Phausios' son,  
Apisáön

Smote in the liver, the midriff below, inflicting a death-wound.

Forward Eurypylos sprang, and wrested the arms from his shoulders;

But, while taking the arms, Alexander the godlike, perceiving,

Drew his bow on the spoiler and pierced his thigh with the arrow.

In it the shaft was broken, and back to the lines of his comrades

Shrank he, avoiding his fate; and he called to the Danaans, saying: —

“Leaders and princes of Argos, turn back, and hold your position.

Ward the pitiless day from Aias, for darts overwhelm him;

Neither, methinks, will he scape from the war-din raging about him.

Nay, make a desperate stand for great Telamonian Aias.”

Thus spake Eurypylos wounded; and many a warrior about him

Clustered, lifting their spears, and with shields inclined on their shoulders,

Aias came forward to meet them, and turned on reaching his comrades.

Whilst they were fighting like ravening fire the  
horses of Neleus  
Came all reeking with sweat bringing Nestor back  
from the battle,  
Wounded Machaon beside him; and, haply, Achilles  
beheld them,  
Seeing he stood on the stern of a ship, a sea-going  
monster,  
Watching the desperate fight, its arduous toil and  
its turmoil.  
Shouting from top of the ship he called to Patroklos;  
the latter,  
Hearing him, came on the run, — 't was to him the  
beginning of evil.  
First to speak was the son of Menoitios, mighty  
Patroklos: —

“Why, pray, callest thou me, Achilles? for what  
doest thou need me?”

Then said Achilles: “Patroklos my friend, I ween  
the Achaians  
Soon will be at my feet, imploring;<sup>1</sup> theirs will the  
need be

<sup>1</sup> The reader might naturally expect in this passage some allusion to the events of the night before detailed in the Ninth Book; but Achilles there showed himself utterly unsatisfied with the reparation offered and, as I apprehend his character, was not the man to admit or even think the next day that he had made a mistake. See also remarks upon this passage in the introduction.

Now this distress presseth on them — a need insupportable longer.

But, for the present, Patroklos, run over to Nestor's, and ask him

Who was the wounded man he just brought back from the battle;

Seen from behind he resembled that born physician, Macháōn.

I did not see the man's face, for the team sped by in a twinkling."

Thus he said; and Patroklos, obeying the hest of his comrade,

Hurried away on the run to the camps and ships of the Argives.

Now, when the horses of Neleus had come to the quarters of Nestor,

Promptly Eurymedon, squire of the Ancient, unharnessed the horses.

Nestor himself and Macháōn stood out in the wind on the sea-shore,

Drying the sweat from their tunics. They stayed till refreshed by its coolness;

Then they proceeded inside, and there fair-tressed Hekamédè —

High-born captive Achilles had won at the storming of Lesbos,

Later awarded to Nestor as being the wisest in counsel —

Mixed them a drink. To begin with she brought out a beautiful table,

Polished, with feet of copper enameled, and on it a basket

Placed that was fashioned of bronze, and an onion to flavor the mixture,

Also honey beside it, and meal of god-given barley;

Then a magnificent cup from Nestor's palace in Pylos

Decked with beautiful studding of gold. Four

handles the cup had,

Each with a pair of doves on either side at the juncture

Feeding, and fashioned of gold, and two broad feet were thereunder.

Only with labor another could raise this cup from the table

When it was full, but Nestor of old could easily lift it.

In this, then, for the twain the woman, fair as a goddess,

Made a mixture of Pramnian wine, and on it she grated

Goat-milk cheese with a grater of bronze, and sprinkled on barley;

Then, when the mixture was ready, invited the heroes to try it.

So when the twain had drunk, and banished the thirst  
that consumed them,  
Then sat talking together, Patroklos stood in the  
doorway.  
Up from his shining chair rose the aged man when  
he saw him,  
Led him in by the hand, and courteously bade him  
be seated.  
Being unwilling Patroklos refused, and told him the  
reason: —

“No seat for me, Zeus-nurtured old man; thou wilt  
not persuade me.  
One I respect and dread hath sent me hither to ask  
thee  
Who was the wounded man thou broughtest; I know  
without asking,  
Seeing Machaon before me, and now must go back  
to Achilles.  
Well thou knowest, Zeus-nurtured old man, our friend  
over yonder,  
Just what a terror he is, in his haste even blaming the  
blameless.”

Him, then, answered in turn the Gerenian veteran,  
Nestor: —  
“Why doth Achilles concern himself so for wounded  
Achaians,

Yet heedeth not the despair which distresseth the  
host; for our bravest,  
Men we rely on, now lie at the ships, all bleeding and  
wounded.  
Snitten, for one, is Tydeides, the mighty in fight,  
Diomedes.  
Wounded is spear-famed Odysseus, and wounded  
King Agamemnon,  
Yea, and this other I brought from the fray but now,  
as thou seest,  
Smit by a shaft from the bow-string; and yet Achilles,  
the valiant,  
Taketht no thought for the Danaan host, nor pitieth  
either.  
Is he to wait till the sea-going ships drawn up on the  
sea-beach  
Burn in ravening fire in spite of the Argives, and with  
them  
We, too, perish in rapid succession? . . .<sup>1</sup>  
. . . . . He, if I know him,  
When it is all too late will bitterly weep for the army.  
Comrade, a parting injunction thy sire, Menoitios  
gave thee,  
Gave on the day when he sent thee from Phthia to  
King Agamemnon:

<sup>1</sup> I omit a long interpolation inserted between the first clause of line 668 in the original and the last clause of line 763, the two parts making one line as first composed.



Two of us, godlike Odysseus and I, were there and in person

Heard every word in the halls of the charge he solemnly gave thee.

We, when collecting the host thro' Achaia for this expedition,

Came to the dwelling of Peleus, and found Menoitios in it,

Also thee, and Achilles; that ancient veteran Peleus  
There in the court-yard was burning to Zeus, dread  
lord of the thunder,

Haunches fat of an ox, and from chalice of gold he  
was holding

Poured libations of sparkling wine on the sacrifice  
burning.

You two were busy preparing the meat, and just at  
that moment

We twain stood in the doorway; and up rose Achilles  
astounded,

Led us within by the hand, and bade us be seated,  
and duly

Set entertainment before us — the good old custom  
to strangers.

When our wants were supplied, and eating and  
drinking were over,

Then our business I told, and urged you youngsters  
to join us.

Both were eager to go, and both sires over and over

Charges gave to their sons, old Peleus telling  
Achilles  
Ever to fight in the front and eminent be over  
others.  
This was the charge given thee by Menoitios, scion  
of Aktor: —

“ ‘Son, Achilles is greater than thou both in race and  
in prowess;  
Thou art the greater in age, and the prudent word and  
the timely  
That I enjoin thee to speak, to suggest to him courses  
of action,  
Aye, and give turn to his thoughts, and thus thou  
wilt profit him greatly.’

“Thus did the old man charge thee, and thou hast  
forgotten; bethink thee!  
Speak even now to this hot-headed youth; thou  
mayest persuade him.  
If, for himself, some oracle spoken daunteth his  
spirit,  
Be it some bidding from Zeus hath been told by the  
goddess, his mother,  
Let him at least send thee, and the rest of the Myrmi-  
don soldiers  
With thee, affording some glimmer of hope to the  
darkened Achaians;

Aye, let him give thee his beautiful armor to wear  
to the battle,  
Hoping the Trojans will think thou art he, and withdraw from the onset,  
Giving the Danaan warriors at least a moment to breathe in,  
All worn out as they are; and short are the respites of battle.  
Easily you who are fresh may drive men wearied with fighting  
Back to the city again, and save our ships and encampment."

Thus he spake, and the heart of Patroklos so stirred that, complying,  
Off he went on the run by the ships to the camp of Achilles.  
There where assemblies were held, and the gods had altars erected,  
There Eurypylos met him, the Zeus-born son of Euaimon,  
Smit in the thigh with an arrow, and limping back from the battle.  
Down from his shoulders and head poured agonized sweat, and the bitter  
Wound quite gurgled with blood, none the less his spirit was stedfast.

Seeing, and moved with compassion, the mighty son  
of Menoitios  
Brake forth in wingèd words of wild lamentation  
and yearning: —

“Ah, unhappy, unhappy, ye Danaan leaders and  
princes,  
Men foredoomed afar from your friends and the land  
ye were born in  
Here unburied in Troy to sate swift dogs with your  
bodies.  
Princely Eurypylos, tell me I pray, if the Argives are  
likely  
Longer to hold their own 'gainst the powerful onset  
of Hector,  
Or, subdued by his spear, to-day will sink to des-  
truction.”

Then for rejoinder disabled Eurypylos answered him,  
saying: —  
“Not any longer, Patroklos, is hope of defence for  
the Argives.  
Nay, they will fall by their ships; for all who afore-  
time were bravest  
Bleeding and wounded and powerless for good now  
lie in the barracks  
Under the hands of the Trojans; and Troy's strength  
triumpheth always.

